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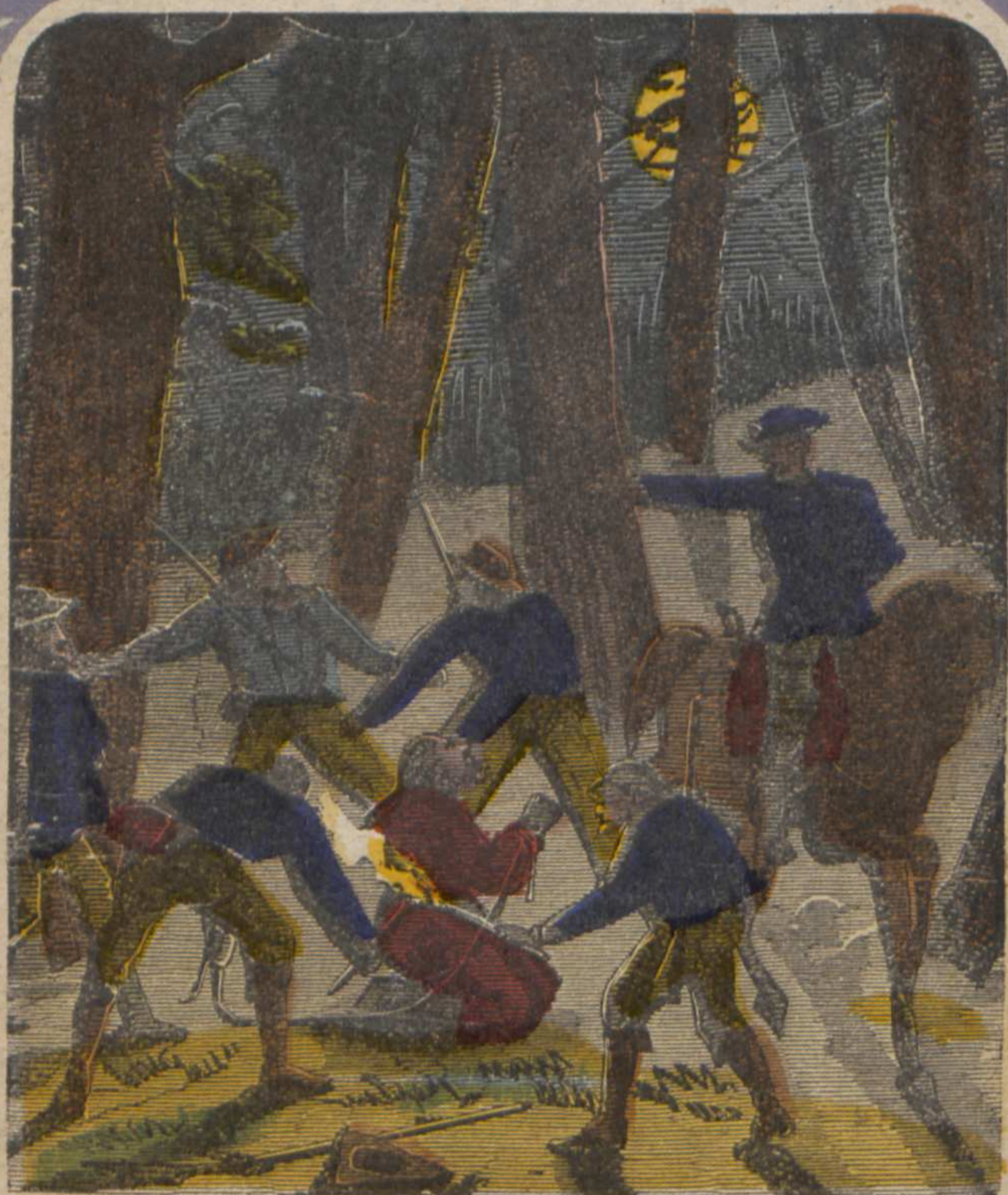
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POCKET NOVELS



The Sons of Liberty. 176



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THE SONS OF LIBERTY;

OR,

THE MAID OF TRYON.

A STORY OF THE MOHAWK VALLEY IN REVOLUTIONARY DAYS.

BY W. J. HAMILTON,

AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING POCKET NOVELS:

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THE SONS OF LIBERTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE STRANGER.

CLOSE by the Mohawk, not far from Schenectady, a settler had made himself a cabin, during the perilous Revolutionary war. His name was Edward Connor, and he had been a member of a good family in England; but like many of his class, had been glad to change the hard fare of a man of limited means in the old world for the wide-spreading meadows of the new. He had settled in the land owned by Sir John Johnson, and was a sort of agent for the crafty knight, who was then at the zenith of his power over the Indians. Connor had a family consisting of five persons: his three sons, Richard, David and John, his wife, and daughter Miriam, the latter a beautiful girl of seventeen. In the time they had occupied the land, the strong arms of the father and his sons had cleared away many acres of the thick woods, and the green corn and waving grain were now growing where the pine and maple had once stood. Connor acknowledged himself far happier here than he had ever been as the dependent son of a younger brother in the mother country. His sons had grown up healthy and strong, and his daughter, though not so effeminate as many of the officers' ladies at the garrison, was the acknowledged beauty of the whole section. Not a lad within thirty miles had not heard of the beauty of Miriam Connor, and were ready to toast her at any time, as the prettiest and best girl in the Mohawk country.

The time at which this story is written was that period when the wrongs of the mother country to the provinces were bringing out the open discontent of those bold spirits, who afterward asserted the right of man to self-government. At first they confined themselves entirely to words and to tar and feathers for a particularly obnoxious stamp-officer. In

this rough country, "frontier law" *was* the law, and many an officer of the king was roughly handled, whose case never came before his majesty's courts, which did not care to notice every nice offense against the common law, knowing, as the judges did, that the sturdy foresters would laugh at their authority. Many secret bands were formed, and it had become quite common for the young men to meet in council, pass seditious resolutions and speak against the king and his council. Dick Connor and his youngest brother John were stanch Sons of Liberty, while David was known to be a faithful ally of Sir John and ready to do any thing for him. A coldness had sprung up between the brothers in consequence, and David had gone to Johnson's Hall to live, and was made a lieutenant in Johnson's new regiment of yeomanry, which was raised with the intention of putting down any more of the insurrectionary efforts of these "Sons of Liberty."

Schenectady was in a terrible state on the day when the odious stamp-act was announced. Men ran about the streets with angry faces, upon which a stern resolve to die rather than submit was to be read. All at once the crowd began to gather at the center of the village, where a man was speaking rapidly. No one knew from whence he came. He was young, apparently less than thirty, with a commanding figure, and dark, flashing eyes. He spoke eagerly, earnestly. He pointed out to them the fatal effect of yielding to any such act of Parliament. "Once establish a precedent," said he, "and your liberties are gone forever. Yield in this instance, and you will be called upon to yield in a hundred more. America never will submit to taxation from abroad—never." The people cheered the young speaker. Who was he? Whence did he come? These questions ran from mouth to mouth and were answered by the speaker himself. "It matters but little," he said, "what my name may be. It is enough that I am one of the men whom that noble man, Colonel Bane, called 'Sons of Liberty' in the British Parliament. We claim the name. It is ours by right. Sons of Liberty we *are* and we *will* be. Let men prate as they will of 'allegiance to the king.' I honor the powers that be; I have fought for the king in Canada, under the glorious Wolfe, and saw *him* die. I am ready to give my blood again in the same cause, if the king will honor

that blood and not debase it. But I will never submit, nor will you, my brethren, to the extortion of the stamp-act. Let them speak as they will, my hand and my voice are against this foul attempt to override our wishes, our rights, our self-respect."

"And we will stand by you," said the deep voice of Dick Connor, as he raised his strong brown hand on high. "Listen, all who claim the name of Sons of Liberty. We will pledge ourselves before this stranger that none of the stamps shall be used here with our consent. For my part, I would as soon cut off this right hand, and with the other fling it in the fire, as to write upon a stamp with it; ay, sooner. Let this stranger hear your voices, Sons of Liberty."

A cheer arose which startled the echoes in the hills. When it subsided a shrill voice was heard demanding the meaning of all this clamor, and a young man in the uniform of Johnson's regiment pushed his way through the crowd and stood in front of the speaker, who had mounted the steps of the tavern known as the Royal George. The intruder was small in stature, but with a light, active body, which spoke of great muscular power. His face was dark, and tanned by exposure to the elements almost to the hue of a mulatto. From this he had gained among his comrades the sobriquet of "Black Dave," for it was the brother of Dick and John who stood before them. Many of the crowd shrunk back a little, awed by the weapons which hung in his belt, and left clear for him a free path to the stranger, who stood regarding the new-comer with a fixed smile.

"What does this mean?" demanded Black Dave, throwing a threatening look at the immovable form of the stranger. "Who dares stir up sedition against the king in this good town?"

"Get you hence, David," cried Dick, thrusting himself through the crowd. "Meddle not here. You have said that you and I are to be strangers, and, by my life, I would not be friends with a man who would *sell* himself to Sir John. This is no place for you, man. Go back to the Hall, and tell the stout knight that a set of rascals, with your brother Dick at their head, are leagued against the stamps. If you look for a whole hide take yourself out of this."

David drew his pistols, and looked about him with a defiant mien. "I should dearly like to see the man," he said, in his shrill voice, "who would dare to lay a hand upon me when in the line of my duty. I am sent by Sir John, who has heard of your factious doings, and I am here to warn you. As for him on the steps, if he will take my advice, he will carry his long body out of this town as soon as may be. There are those upon his track who will make short work of him if he is taken, as I doubt not he will be."

The stranger never uttered a word, but continued to regard the young Tory with a pitying smile, which angered him more than ever.

"Your tongue was loud enough a moment since, sir. Can you not speak now, and not stand there like a stone? What is your name? What is your business? I ask it in the name of Sir John Johnson."

"Sir John is a magistrate, and desires a name, does he? It shall be any thing you wish. Which will you take? Jones, Brown, or Robinson?"

"You mock me, sir," replied David, with an angry look. "Have a care, sir. If you give me reason to do it, I shall arrest you in the king's name. I ask you once more—what is your business here, and what name do you bear?"

"I am like a certain personage mentioned in the Book of Job, who had been 'going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.' Perhaps you remember the person. He is supposed by some to be possessed of a cloven foot, horns and a tail. I have many names, and my business is my own."

"Do you refuse to tell me, then, what I have said I will know? Think it over, sir. No man has any right to refuse the questions of a king's officer. I do not wish to make trouble, and you had better answer my questions."

"I warn you, David," said Dick, touching him on the shoulder. "You are treading upon dangerous ground. When a crowd is as quiet as this has been while you have been threatening a true man, when they awake look out for a storm. If you will go away now, I think the boys may be inclined to let you pass. But if you stay here, I will not answer for the consequences."

"Oh, ho!" sneered the other. "Go back to your farm, my rebel brother. Remember, Cain was a tiller of the ground. I have that in mind, and if you come any nearer, you shall measure how long a line you will make upon the ground. As for this fellow, who refuses to listen to my just demand, I call all worthy subjects of the king to aid me in arresting him, in the name of the king and Sir John."

With these words, he rushed up the steps. The stranger never moved a step until he came within reach; then, lifting his strong arm, coolly knocked him down. He fell headforemost down the steps, with the blood gushing from his mouth and nose.

"You see he forced it on me, gentlemen. I had no choice. I have sworn that no king's officer shall lay a hand upon me, except at his own peril, while I am engaged in this business. Is it your brother, sir?"

"I am grieved to say, yes," replied Dick, looking down at the prostrate form, without offering to lift him. "He is my brother, but he is a creature of King George."

"I am sorry to hear that so true a champion of liberty should be cursed in this way," said the stranger, kindly. "But, he is reviving, and I had better go. Good friends, give back. But, before I go, let me say that there is a thing in this town called a stamp-officer. Send me the sign of liberty at the tavern yonder, and I will come to you this night, and tell you what to do. You had better disperse for the present."

The crowd scattered, and left the three brothers by themselves. David slowly raised himself upon his elbow, and looked at the two with an expression of utter hatred. They were brothers. What of that? In those times, during the entire period of the Revolution, those who struggled against each other with determined animosity were of the same blood. That rancor of relatives can not be described in words.

"You are brought low, David," said the youngest brother John. "I am sorry that you are not with us."

"Their heads shall lie as low as mine, who have done this," replied David, bitterly, rising to his feet. "Jack, I am not angry at you, *yet*. For that fellow at your side, he is the same to me as that villain who has debased me. Will you

come over to the side of the king? What is a shilling or so to us on stamped paper, compared with our duty to the king? Go with me to Sir John. My word for it, he shall prefer you, and make you an officer in his new regiment. I have the promise of the first vacancy, and I think I can promise that you shall have my place. Say, will you come?"

"You do wrong to ask me, David," replied John. "As you say a shilling on stamped paper is nothing to us, if we give it freely; but, when it is extorted from us, as in the stamp-act, I am not the man to stand idly by and see it done. I have joined the Sons of Liberty."

"My curse upon them and all connected with them. You are doing a wrong to yourself, boy. But, let it pass. What do you fellows intend to do about the stamps?"

"Oh, we can do nothing," said Dick, in a mocking tone. "Of course *we* are powerless. It is 'the law,' you know—a regular act of Parliament—therefore we *must* obey."

"That don't sound much like the talk I heard a few moments since, Dick. But you are not serious, I see. I always expect mischief from you when you go on in that way. I shall be on my guard. Mind, if you get into any mischief, you do not know how soon I may be on your back with a company of Johnson's Greens."

"I am not afraid of your Green-horns," replied Dick.

"The horns are very sharp," said David, turning away. "Look out for them."

The young officer left his two brothers, mounted a horse which stood under the shade of the shed, and rode out of the village. His course led him toward the house of his father, which he had not visited for some weeks. The farm was not more than two miles out of town, and the good horse he rode soon carried him over the ground. He found his father busy about the place, for in these troublesome times the "boys" were away a great deal, and the old people had to see to the work. Mr. Connor was a tall man, with hair slightly silvered. His face was that of an upright citizen.

"Have you heard what is going on in the town?" said the son, throwing himself from his horse and giving the bridle to a negro boy, who ran up to offer his assistance. "Give him a peck of oats, Pomp, and rub him down well. I say, again,

have you heard what these hot-heads are doing in the town?"

"Yes," said the old man, calmly.

"You know what they are doing. You have heard that five hundred Connecticut farmers came into Weathersfield and made Jared Ingersoll, the stamp-officer, resign his office, and then take off his hat and give three cheers for 'Liberty, Property, and no Stamps?' Do you know that the effigies of the English ministry were hung upon the liberty-tree at Boston? Do you know that Congress has dared to draw up a Declaration of Rights and send a memorial to both Houses of Parliament and to the king? Have you heard this?"

"Certainly. Who has not?"

"Do you know, father, that a ship with stamps on board has entered New York harbor, and that these thrice-accursed Sons of Liberty have posted placards all about the town, threatening those who dared to use them? Cobden said he was resolved to have the stamps distributed. 'Let us see who will dare to put the act into execution!' say the Sons of Liberty. And they have the best of it so far. Oliver, Secretary of the Colony of Massachusetts, has been compelled to resign. The mobs have attacked the houses of men in authority. All the Governors, with the exception of the Governor of Rhode Island, took the oath to carry the act into execution. What of that? There is not a stamp to be seen. They have been destroyed, or the officers dare not bring them out. I myself was knocked down to-day, in the street before the Royal George, while attempting to arrest one of the Sons of Liberty."

"Did you see the boys while there?" asked Mr. Connor, eagerly.

"Yes. They stood by and saw me knocked down like a dog. If I had waited long enough, I might have had the pleasure of being beaten by my own brother, the worthy Dick. But this is not what I came about. I wish to know how you feel on the subject of the stamps."

"I shall say nothing. I shall not use the stamps, since all my neighbors are against it. Whether it is right or not, I have nothing to say. I am an old man, and shall not join in the quarrel, if a quarrel there must be. I hope the ministry

will consent to the repeal of the act, since the feeling is so strong against it."

"There must be no neutrals on this question. If you refuse to use the stamps, you are identified with the enemies of your king. You *must* use them. See, I have some stamped paper here, and I want you to keep your word with me about the sixty-acre lot, by the river. You promised to deed it to me. Make it out on this paper."

"Was this a trap for me, David?"

"Never mind what it was. Make it out on this paper."

"No, David. I shall never do that."

"But, I tell you that you *shall*."

"You are speaking to your *father*, David."

"I care not. You shall not join in this mad movement if I can help it. Once for all," striking the stamp with his clenched hand, "will you or will you not make out the deed of that land upon the paper I now hold in my hand?"

"Once for all, *I will not*."

"Then you are a traitorous old *fool*!" cried the unnatural son. "Do you want to dangle to one of these liberty-trees, with a stamp upon your breast? We will cram the stamp down their throats with our swords! Here, Miriam, speak to the old man. He will ruin himself."

Miriam Connor, the beauty of the Mohawk country, had come out of the house, and stood a few feet away. She had heard the last words of her brother, and her fine face expressed her detestation of such language. She had a good right to her reputation as a beauty. She had the light, active form belonging to her English blood, a delicately poised head, with a flood of rich, golden-brown hair, a sweet mouth, hazel eyes and delicate skin. Just the sort of enticing little beauty to bewitch the children of men.

"For shame, David!" she said, advancing to his side. "What do you mean? Have you no more reverence for your father than this?"

He stammered some rude excuse, for the fellow was somewhat afraid of his beautiful sister. It had been the plan of the royal magistrate, Sir John Johnson, to get some such man as Connor to accept the stamp-act, and through him, many others. David had undertaken the mission, and would have

gone about it in a more politic way but for the meeting in front of the Royal George. After a few angry words with his father and sister, he mounted his horse again, gave the darky who brought him out a hearty cuff, by way of payment, which sent him rolling to the earth, set spurs to his horse, and galloped off toward Johnson's "castle."

CHAPTER II.

THE SONS OF LIBERTY.

JORAM WHITEHEAD was stamp-officer in the good town of Dorrup, now known as Schenectady. He was a man well suited to the office. An avaricious, cold-blooded rascal, with no feeling for any thing but the coin of the realm, for which he always had an itching palm. In person he was short and bent, and his face was the color of parchment. He had refused to hear the warnings of the Sons of Liberty, and announced his intention of distributing the obnoxious stamps. He was thus bold from the fact that he was backed by the whole power of Johnson and the Royal Greens.

On the evening of the day on which our story opens men might have been seen stealing away from the village in various directions, and apparently without any purpose of meeting. Those gifted with miraculous sight would have seen, however, that, once out of sight of the village, their paths drew together, and that they met in a little open glade in the woods. They were the men who had listened to the speaker in front of the Royal George—for the most part, rough, uncouth fellows, whose hands had become hard and brown with labor, but whose faces were sternly set, as if their purpose had been formed never to be changed. These were the men who, afterward, stood up shoulder to shoulder, in the great Revolution, and did good service for their common country. This was a part of the ragged crew who hemmed in Burgoyne at Saratoga, under the lead of the heroic Schuyler—they who followed brave old Herkimer to the fatal field of Oriskany, and

died gloriously, while their dying leader sat wounded under a great tree, smoking his pipe and ordering the battle.

The sons of Edward Connor were at that forest council, armed, like others, with long rifles, for these woodmen could not use the remarkably ungainly weapon used by the king's men, calculated to do more damage to the owner than to the enemy.

Dick was there, eager and declaiming loudly; John, looking on, with a calm determination upon his young face. Almost the last man who reached the rendezvous was the stranger, who had been visited by Dick, and informed where they would meet. He came among them as a civilian of the higher order; but a certain something in his look and walk told that he was a soldier by nature and by training. He smiled as he saw so many of the Sons assembled, and looked about him for a rostrum. In the midst of the open space, a tree had been felled, and the stump formed a convenient platform. Placing his hand upon the edge, he bounded to the top, lifted his military figure, cast a look of proud confidence over his hearers, and spoke:

"I did not come here to make long speeches, my lads. I know who and what you are, I think; but, before we go on, let me ask if there is one among you who yet yearns after the flesh-pots of Egypt? One who is weary of the work we have undertaken, and who, having put his hand to the plow, looks back? I tell you, Sons of Liberty, that a glorious promise is opening before us, greet it how ye may. This opposition to the stamp-act is only the beginning. Other extortions are at hand which are to this as utter darkness is to the twilight. But, we have met for a purpose. Will any man turn back?"

A thundering "No!" broke from the assembled band.

"Ye speak your minds plainly. Now listen. I have heard that there is a base wretch in this town who, for the gold of the king, will sell these accursed stamps. Will you let him do it?"

"Never!" shouted three score of strong voices. "Burn the old traitor! Rattle his house down about his ears."

"I have a plan," said the stranger. "Will you be patient while I tell it to your leader, Richard Connor?"

A dead silence fell, broken at intervals by low whispering, as the two young men went aside and talked to each other in low tones. The plan of the stranger appeared to strike Richard favorably, and he soon fell in with it. Coming back, he called out five men by name, including John, and told them that he was about to take them on a service which required, above all things, caution and silence. Instructing the rest of the men to stay where they were, he left the woods, accompanied by the stranger and his five chosen companions, and set out for the village. Once near it, they separated, and came into town from different directions, strolling along carelessly, with their guns under their arms. John, according to previous instructions, made his way to the Royal George where he found quite a group of men congregated. Entering the crowd unperceived, he listened to the conversation which was carried on by the royalists.

"Dave is the best one in the lot," one of them was saying. "Dick and Jack belong to the Sons of Liberty. Dave is afraid they mean some mischief to old Joram Whitehead, the stamp-officer, and he swears that if they do any thing he will order the Greens to fire upon them. Sir John is raging. When Dave told him about the meeting here, he jumped up, knocked down a little ducky who happened to be nearest his hand, broke the chair he was sitting in, and sent Dave off to rouse up his company. The knight himself is coming pretty soon."

"Are they watching Whitehead's house?" asked a small fellow, who stood leaning against a pillar, not far away from John. Every one looked at the speaker, for he was a stranger in the town. There was a peculiar twang, too, in his voice, which told of his Massachusetts lineage. He bore their close scrutiny with undisturbed composure.

"When you fellers git tired of looking at me, prehaps yew will answer my question. I guess it ain't hard to do."

"'Pears to me this town is running over with strangers. Here is a man knocks a king's officer down in the very streets, and another is as pert as a three-month-old calf because a man looks at him," grumbled a royalist. "Who are you, my young bantam?"

"Yew didn't take the trouble to ask before. Ef it will be

any sort of use for yew to know, my name is Tommy Perkins, and I live down there by Weathersfield. I cum up here to Dorrupt to see my uncle, and dod rabbit it ef the old cuss ain't gone off to Albany. Let him go, ther old rip!"

"Were you in Weathersfield when the farmers came to Jared Ingersoll's house and made him resign?"

"Yes, I was! You'd better believe it. It was a mournful sight to see him take off his hat and give three cheers for Liberty, Property, and no Stamps! A mournful sight, now mind I tell yew! There was not a dry eye in the crowd."

"Is that so?" asked one of the royalists. "Now we thought that every one enjoyed it."

"Allow me to repeat: there were tears in every eye at the spectacle."

The faces of the listeners wore a doubtful look, while that of the Connecticut boy was as calm as a May morning. "But, yew fellers ain't answered my question yet. Dew they keep watch over the stamp-officer?"

"No. The Sons of Liberty will come roaring into town when they get ready, and we shall hear them fast enough. The Greens are all up-stairs in the ball-room. When they hear the Sons coming, they will burst out and drive them all home, see if they don't. They will soon get tired of that kind of sport."

"So they will," said Tommy. "Of course they will all come roaring down the street, and *when* they come, *then* the Royal Greens will burst out and scare them half to death. 'Pears strange tew me that they shud be scart, too, when they have such nice long guns."

"You don't think they would dare to use them against the king's men, do you? That isn't likely."

"To be sure! You are quite right. It isn't at all likely. Now, I used to hev a king's arm myself once. I bought it one day, and the next I put in about two fingers of powder, and dod rot my skin if she didn't burst into forty thousand pieces. Oh, they are *good* guns, them are king's arms. *Prodigious!*"

"I wonder when these fellows will come?" said one of the men.

"Oh, I don't know. I'd have gone out and tried to find

where they meet, but I've hearn tell that they wouldn't think no more of putting a ball into a man's hide than they would of shooting a deer. So, you see, it don't more than half pay to go spying round. They meet somewhere in the big woods yonder, I don't know where, and there is a pesky crowd of them. I know that Dick Connor told me he would take the skin off any man they caught spying, and turn him going."

John sidled up to the Connecticut boy, and made a peculiar sign, when he was looking at him. The boy started, and returned it promptly. A moment after, John slipped through the house, and out of the back-door. The boy followed, yawning, and saying that he wanted an "eye-opener." After taking a drink of Jamaica, he followed young Connor, and found him standing in the cover of the house. The eye of the Yankee seemingly had been strangely wrought upon by the Jamaica, and no longer appeared full of lazy indifference, but sparkled with delight.

"So you know the name of the man who sent you here?" he demanded, quickly, after looking about to see if he was observed.

"No," said John. "We only know that he is a Son of Liberty, and we think he is good and true."

"He is all that," said Tommy. "I know him and you need have no fear of him. You heard what I said to those fellows about old Ingersoll. I told them that they had tears in their eyes. They had, but the tears were caused by laughter."

"Oh!" said John. "Indeed?"

"That's it. Now I think we had better go. Those fellows were so busy that they did not see you, and you stood in the dark. Johnson's Greens are up-stairs, in the ball-room, but I am afraid the door is locked on the outside, and the key gone. Unless they have better materials for forcing doors than I think they have, they will stay there some time."

"The landlord will let them out."

"I don't see how he can."

"Why not?"

"I have the key in my pocket, that's all," replied Tommy, with an indescribable grin.

"Good," cried John. "How did you do that?"

"I helped the landlord carry some Jamaica up to them, and, as I came last, and they had every thing they wanted, I took charge of the key. Come on. I know where old Whitehead's house is. I saw it to-day."

The two hurried off at a quick pace, and soon passed before a low wooden house which was closed for the night. Tommy gave a low, peculiar whistle, and it was answered by a similar one from some distance. A moment after, a dark form stole out from the cover of a neighboring building, and joined them. It was the stranger. His face was muffled in a scarf, and he was otherwise disguised.

"Are we watched, Tommy?" he said, looking at the boy whom he seemed to know.

"No," replied the lad. "Let's to work at once. No need to waste time. You had better get out of sight, sir," addressing John. "The old fellow knows you, it seems."

"I'll step into the shadow," said John, suiting the action to the word. As soon as he had done this the other two advanced to the door and the stranger knocked. There was a slight confusion in the house, and a tremulous voice demanded who was there.

"A friend," said the stranger. "Open the door."

"What do you want?" repeated the tremulous voice.

"Don't be a fool," answered the stranger. "I come from Sir John Johnson and David Connor."

"Those are always passwords here." A hand was heard fumbling with bolts and bars, and the door swung open to admit the two men. Joram Whitehead stood shivering on the threshold and invited them in.

"The names you have mentioned are strong towers unto me. My hope is that they may be able to put down the vile men who will not let the officers of the king exercise their authority."

"Are we alone?" said the stranger.

"Yes," replied Joram. "Truly I am a lone man, and have no wife; and my servant is away at the Royal George."

"Then we can talk in private."

"Certainly."

"We will talk of this stamp business. You know Sir John's opinion upon this subject."

"He is of the opinion that the stamps must be distributed."

"Are you of that opinion?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure?"

"What do you mean? I have sworn to do so. Sir John has sworn to aid me and he will. I will do my duty."

"Then," cried the stranger, drawing a pistol and placing it to the head of the officer, "speak above a whisper, even, and I will scatter your brains upon the floor."

Joram staggered back against the wall, his teeth chattering, his eyes staring, and his face expressive of the utmost terror, glaring at the pistol within an inch of his nose. There was so much determination expressed in the words of the stranger, that the officer never thought of disputing his authority. He was pinned to the wall, a gag thrust into his mouth and tied behind his ears. This done, the stranger politely offered his left arm, took the pistol in the right, and attempted to lead the fellow out into the street. He struggled desperately.

"Look you, my friend," said the stranger, raising the pistol, "you *must* go with me, dead or alive. If you will come alive, well. If you will not come alive, very good; that is all there is to say upon the subject and we will take you dead. If you are tractable and do not make a fuss, you will go out safely and come back the same. If you do not, there are hands enough ready to dig your grave."

Joram signified by his actions that he was ready to go, and was led out between the two. The other members of the party followed, keeping far enough out of sight, so that Joram should not recognize them, and hurried him out of the village. Once outside, they blindfolded him and hurried him along over a rough way until they reached the woods. Here his hands were fastened behind him, he was tied to a tree, and his captors passed on.

Never, in the course of his miserable life, had the avaricious official endured such pangs as those he felt while he stood alone in the forest. What he heard appalled him. He could distinguish the sound of many voices in the distance, mingled with the murmur of the wind in the leaves, the howling of the wolves in the deeper forest, and the occasional yell of the

panther, just emerging from his lair. At times, an owl or bat flitted by on silent wings, almost brushing his face. He very nearly cried out aloud in his agony. He was alone, alone! Deep in the dismal forest, with wild beasts howling on every side. The most distressing thoughts flitted through his mind. What if he had been brought to this place to be left a prey to the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air? Where had they gone, the men who had brought him to this vile place? Were they demons, and were these spirit-voices which came to him on the wind mingled with bursts of unearthly laughter? He cursed the unlucky stamps which had brought him to this, cursed the day he had accepted the office of stamp-collector.

How long he stood there alone he did not know. It seemed an age, and he was almost frantic when some one came, unbound and led him away. As if it was the plan to terrify him as much as possible, blood-chilling whispers were heard on every side, and the laughter was redoubled, far off in the woods. Shrieks were heard, too, mingled with other fearful sounds. He was led along up a great height, it seemed to him, and then was let down by cords to a dreadful depth, accompanied by the words, "down! down!! down!!!" in a sepulchral tone from a hundred throats. A man blindfolded has no idea of time or space, and it seemed to poor Joram that he was descending, for many minutes, into the bowels of the earth before he struck the ground. He was sensible that a strong smell of brimstone and phosphorus impregnated the air, and that many demon-voices shouted all together:

"He comes! He comes!! He comes!!!" He was suddenly seized, whirled shrieking in the sulphurous atmosphere, and borne away again, scorched by flame and pierced by sharp instruments, and set down at last in a place where the sulphurous fumes were strongest, while the voices cried aloud:

"Judgment!"

A strong hand was laid upon his head, and a solemn voice demanded what he had to uphold him in this hour of trial?

"Faith in God," replied the guilty wretch.

"Speak not his name, irreverent scoffer!" answered the same voice. "Men who lend themselves as the instruments

of a cruel power have no right to use the name of a just and good Deity. God is great, and his power is wonderful. You who call on me for judgment, speak and tell me this mortal's crime."

"You have spoken his crime. He is the tool in the hands of a human tyranny. He uses his power to wrong his brother man," said another voice.

"There is no crime so heinous in our eyes. What shall be his doom?"

"He is yet in the body," said the attendant voice. "Let him be taken back to earth where true men wait to execute upon him the full earthly measure of his crime. They only wait your pleasure, mighty Pluto."

"Let it be as they will. Spirits ye, who attend upon my pleasure, bear him back to earth. I see in him fruits meet for repentance. If when they try him as mortals can, his heart is still hard, let his spirit come to me. It is my will. Death, go with him; and if it is my will, bring him to me. Abaddon, Azrael, Moloch, ye strong spirits, attend him o'er the stream!"

The unhappy man, who by this time was in such a state that every thing was real to him, was again seized, and apparently raised to a great height; then his eyes were uncovered. He stood in the midst of a thick woods, lighted only by a single torch in the center. In the circle of gloom outside the light of the torch, dim figures stood in solemn silence, until a voice called aloud:

"Joram Whitehead."

If the poor fellow had not taken leave of his senses he would have recognized the voice which had pronounced his doom in the regions below. A person who stood by his side called out:

"Here!"

"Lead him forward," said the voice of the leader, who was, in reality, the stranger. Several hands grasped the officer and led him into the gloom.

"Joram Whitehead," said the stranger, "you are one of those men who, for the love of gold, would sell your very soul. We are men who love our country, and have sworn that no foreign tyrant shall trample on our rights. We have

brought you here to-night and it has been shown you what the doom of such a man must be, unless he repents. You shall die unless you yield to our demands."

"What do you want?" whined Joram. "I am sure I am ready to do any thing proper. I want to go home. I must go home. I have *business* on hand for to-night. Please let me go home."

"Peace, fool!" cried the stranger, sternly. "Do you think we are here to listen to whimpers? Hear me. You shall kneel down upon the sod at your feet and raise your right hand to heaven."

Joram obeyed.

"Swear in the name of your Maker, that you will have nothing more to do with these accursed stamps."

"I swear," said Joram.

"Bring the Book," said the stranger. One of the men brought forward a Bible. "Kiss the Book," was now the order.

He did it submissively.

"You have taken a solemn oath. Now swear to go to Sir John Johnson and resign your office in the morning."

"I swear."

"Kiss the Book." He obeyed.

"Release him," said the stranger, solemnly. "He is ours, by the bond of a solemn oath."

The cords were taken from his limbs and numerous torches were lighted. Then he saw the men who had seized him. Many of them were his own neighbors, who hailed him jocosely as a Son of Liberty. While they were pulling him about, and laughing violently, they heard cries in various parts of the forest. Soon after men who had been posted all about the rendezvous, came in, saying that Johnson's Greens were searching the woods for them. The party broke up, and every man went to his own home, easily eluding the Greens.

CHAPTER III.

TOMMY IN THE CASTLE.

THE young person who had given his name as Tommy Perkins, took to the saddle the next morning and rode out in search of an imaginary uncle, who was supposed to be somewhere in the Mohawk country. The youngster was a lad of uncommon penetration, and was, in reality, dispatched to discover what the friends of the stamp-act were doing at Johnson's castle. The Royal Greens, confined at the Royal George, had spent the evening in hilarity, thinking that it was their leader who had locked them in and carried away the key. About ten o'clock the servant of Joram Whitehead went home and found the doors open and his master gone. The marks of a scuffle in the room led him to believe that the old man had been carried away. He ran in hot haste to the Royal George and told his story just as David Connor, who had been out on important business, came back. He rushed to the upper room to call out the Royal Greens and found them securely locked in. After some time spent in prying open the door, which was of strong oak and resisted stoutly, they were released and came forth, most of them in a state of inebriation. Once outside, the covering sergeant sat down by the side of the road and commenced pounding a large stone because it refused to square off for a fight. Which would have had the best of it, the stone or the sergeant, ever must remain a mystery, for David spoiled the combat by ordering the doughty soldier to be taken to the lock-up, there to get sober at his leisure. For this reason the party which went in search of the Sons of Liberty were few in number, and were easily eluded. Joram Whitehead was found, but was "non-committal" on the subject of his adventures for the night, as one of the friends had whispered that, if he spoke of what he had seen, a sharp sword would cut him in two. As the old man believed implicitly that he had descended into the infernal pit, and had heard the voice of the great ruler

of Hades, he did not dare to speak of what he had done. Even the threats of David had no effect, except in strengthening his design of resigning his office. He set out next day to ride to Johnson's castle, and Tommy, with a good humor which was hardly appreciated by Joram, volunteered to go with him and see him safe through, repeating the pleasant fiction about his "uncle" whom he wished so much to find. But, as he was not to be shaken off, the old man was forced to accept his company.

Tommy rode an obstinate little Connecticut pacer, which, at times, evinced a desire to travel entirely upon two feet, a course of action not at all to the taste of the rider, who was continually having struggles with his horse, in which he always had the victory.

At the close of the day they came in sight of the castle, and rode into the inclosure, Tommy serene as a May morning, while the old man was in a fever. He had been considering, all along the way, whether he ought not to give up the youngster as a breaker of the law, but the remembrance of the fearful night through which he had passed was too much for him. He dreaded to meet Sir John, who was a passionate man; but it must be done.

"Here we are," said Tommy, cheerfully. "Now, old man, climb down. Don't be afraid. I'll back you to the last. They shan't hurt you."

"This *can't* be a boy," muttered the old man. "It isn't a boy. He knows more than a man. The idea of his telling *me* not to be afraid and that he will *back me*. Ha! ha!"

One of Johnson's men, who was loitering about the court, told them where to put the horses, and where to get something for them to eat. This done, the old man sent up his name to Sir John, and demanded an interview. It was granted at once, and he was ushered into a large room, where the baronet sat at his supper. He looked up with an angry scowl, as Whitehead came in, which boded no good.

"So you have come, sir," he said. "I hear a bad account of you. My lieutenant, David Connor, tells me that you were spirited away, last night."

"Wa-al, he was, squire," said Tommy, quietly. "E-tarnal spirits, I guess."

"And who may you be?" demanded Sir John, turning quickly upon him. "I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance."

"That shan't stand in the way," said Tommy, promptly. "My name is Tommy Perkins, and I live down to Weathersfield. I reckon yew know where to locate Weathersfield."

"What are you doing here?"

"Wa-al, jest now, I calculate I'm a-standin' up. 'Twould be Christian-like ef I was asked tew take a cheer."

"You think so?"

"I reckon. I cum up here to look arter my uncle, and the onmitigated skunk has migrated ag'in. Prehaps no one but me would stand it, a-lookin' arter him."

"Is your uncle at the castle?"

"How dew I know? Yew hev got an awful lot of men round here, I guess, and it wouldn't hurt to look them over. You ought to consider a nevew's feelings; you ought, now, really."

"What was your uncle's name?"

"His name? Wa-al, 'twan't no name to be 'shamed on, as I knows. In p'int of fact, it is as pooty a name as any in Connecticut. It begins with a 'P,' and ends with an 's,' and when you get done spellin' you say Perkins."

"That is your way of telling me that his name is Perkins."

"Ya-as."

"Then let me suggest that you had better go outside and look for him. If you find him, come back and let me know."

"I couldn't think of it. Yew see I made a promise, and I allers sticks tew a promise. I told that old man that I would stand by him, and I am going to dew it. He has got something to say. While he says it, I will locate myself in one of these big chairs and give you my moral support. Pitch in, old Parchment."

The surpassing impudence of the boy called a smile to the stern face of Sir John. He had seated himself in a large chair, placed his feet on another, and with serene composure waited the event.

"You don't intend to leave us," said the baronet.

"Thank you. I'm pretty comfortable, myself. Go on with the funeral!"

"Mr. Whitehead, do you wish this boy to hear what we have to say?"

Joram looked at the boy and saw a strange gleam in his eye, which he did not like; so he said,

"I see no harm of it. Let him stay."

"Very good. Now tell me what happened last night."

"Sir John, I did not come here to be questioned. My neighbors have been speaking with me about the stamp-act, and have used arguments beyond my power to resist. I have decided to resign my office, since I can not hold it without embroiling myself in a constant trouble with my neighbors."

"Joram Whitehead, do you know where you have come to, to make this avowal? In the name of the king do you think I will bear this? You shall *not* resign. You *dare* not do it. I give you warning of it. Enough, more than enough, of the cowards who have taken office from the king have thrown it up, under the threats of a vile mob. It can not be done here."

But, Whitehead, now that he had broken the ice, was quite as firm as the baronet, and answered, hotly,

"I have made up my mind, Sir John. I live in constant dread. I do not know at what hour the Sons of Liberty will break into my house and treat me to a coat of tar and feathers. As I have no desire for any such clothing, I beg leave to take the wisest course and live a peaceful life in my old age."

"Hear, hear!" said Tommy, softly.

"And you dare to come here," cried Sir John, rising and pacing quickly up and down the room, with his hands clasped behind him—"you dare to come here and tell me this to my face, that you think of yielding at this moment, when the king needs the help of all his servants? Would that the Sons of Liberty had but one neck and I could sever it at a single blow! It is not so much that the stamp-act is to be resisted. It is the beginning of a settled resistance to the just acts of Parliament. But, we will make them swallow the act yet, curse them! They shall take the stamps, at least while I have any power. And I have you in my power. If you do not

go back to the town and distribute the stamps, I will have you sent to prison as a traitor."

"Don't let him scare you, old codger," said Tommy. "I reckon there's boys enough to back you if you do *right*."

Sir John stamped his foot angrily: "Speak, sir! Do you agree to keep your office? No stammering—no prevarication. Say, in so many words, whether you will or whether you will not."

"If you will have it, then, I will *not*."

"What, ho!" cried Sir John. "Without there!"

Two or three men entered quickly.

"Lay hands on that old rascal, who is a traitor to his king. Take him away to the oak chamber. Take the boy and lock him up. He knows too much."

The men advanced to seize the two, but started back in considerable alarm, when Tommy drew a pistol and cocked it: "I didn't come here to be taken, and I will shoot any man who tries to lay a hand upon him or me. We came here in good faith, and we are going away safe."

"You are a plucky lad," said Sir John, laughing. "I don't like to interfere with you. Clear out and look after your uncle. You have my word that you shall not be harmed. As for our friend here, I am a magistrate, and claim my right to seize him."

"You will give him a fair trial?"

"Yes."

"Then I won't say any more about it now. I'll go out and see if I *can* find my unc. Just as like as not he has migrated ag'in. He is just about the all-firedest man for migration yew ever did see. It beats all how many places I've gone to and tried to find him and couldn't. Keep up a good heart, old fox. Don't let them scare you. If they hurt you, just let me know, and the Liberty-boys will rare up powerful and wipe every Tory out of the valley. They will, by hokey!"

"Are you a Liberty-boy?" asked Johnson.

"Wa-al, I guess I am, *kinder*. That is to say, I like to see every one dew just as he darn pleases. That's where I live. When you try to climb me, you bark up the wrong tree. Yew dew."

"Here," said the baronet, "take this boy down to the

servants' hall, and give him something to eat. Put Mr. Whitehead in the oak room and give him his supper. Now, I don't want to force your inclinations, friend Joram, but you shall stay there until you make up your mind to do your duty."

"That's right," said Tommy. "Feed a man before you hang him—that's *my* motto. Now, then, Green-coat, look sharp. Where is the kitchen?"

They went down together, and Tommy performed upon a trencher with admirable effect, talking with one of Johnson's men as if he had known him from his youth up. The man at the same time essayed to pump him with great effect.

"Who was that tall fellow that knocked down Dave Connor?"

"Did he knock him down?" asked Tommy, with his mouth full.

"Yes, he did. Do you know him?"

"I've seen him som'ers or other," replied Tommy, making fearful ravages upon a haunch of venison.

"Where?"

"I don't call to mind *just* the place, now. It might have been at Albany, it might have been at York, or it might have been at Weathersfield. You see I don't stay much in one place. This uncle of mine, I don't mind telling you, is a fearful load on my mind; it is, sure-ly. But I'll hunt him down. Pass that bottle. Your health, Mr. Green."

"My name isn't Green."

"Wa al, mine is Perkins, and I belong down to the little town of Weathersfield, Connecticut. What is your name, if I may be so bold?"

"Derrick Von Guys."

"Oh, you have a sweet name to sound. I heard of a man who broke his neck trying to pronounce just such a name, and another who got the lock-jaw and died. You had better let me call you Green."

"But, do you know this man who spoke to the people at the Royal George?"

"Know him? Of course I know any man I have ever seen, and, as I told you before, I have seen him som'ers, I can't call to mind where, though this uncle of mine—"

"What is his name?"

"Whose name? Old unc's?"

"No—that speaker's name."

"You heard what he said about it."

"*He* said he might be the devil."

"To be sure. Take his word for it, then. I am sure he ought to know. If he says he is the devil, let him have the credit. I don't want it."

"But you certainly ought to know a man like him when you see him. Now, what *is* his name?"

"I heard him called Edgar once. I don't know whether it was Mr. Edgars or Edgar Jones or Smith or Robinson; the names he gave you the choice of that day. He knows his own name. Better ask *him*."

"I'll tell you why we are so particular about him," said the Tory, with a sudden burst of confidence. "We think here that he is somehow connected with the Schuylers, and all the men in Johnson's barony hate the Schuylers like death, and we would like to pick a hole in his coat if he *is* a Schuyler."

A shade passed over the face of the boy, it might have been of anger. But, the Johnson man did not notice this. Tommy bent closer over his plate, and swallowed the food pretty fast. At last he spoke:

"What makes you think he is a Schuyler?"

"Dave thinks so. He is down on him like death."

"For knocking him down?"

"Yes."

"You may be right," said the lad. "He *may* be a Schuyler for what I know to the contrary. There; have that girl take away these things. I haven't any appetite."

"I shouldn't think you would have," said the other, laughing. "Here, Madge."

An Indian woman, who had brought in the food, came in and took away the dishes, Tommy looking on the while, and picking his teeth. He then went out with his companion, and made himself very free with the Johnson men, who were lounging about in the court, and whistling or playing cards with greasy and well-thumbed packs. He kept them in a roar until late at night, telling them of his remarkable

adventures in quest of the uncle who never turned up. He picked up what news he could of the designs of the baronet, and then retired for the night. The Johnson men never knew how it was done, but when they woke next morning, the pacer had disappeared from the meadow, where he had been left feeding, taking Tommy with him. And for many a day they did not see the face of the boy again.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STRANGER'S ESCAPE.

It is not to be supposed that so vindictive a person as David Connor intended to allow a man to escape without question, who had insulted him by a blow in the face. On the morning after the disappearance of the boy, he mounted, and calling to his aid four desperadoes out of his company, rode into Schenectady. The good people of the town feared these rough riders of Johnson's. Relying on the support they received from the baronet, they committed many acts of license which would not have been allowed in other men. But of late weeks the citizens began to resist these acts, and oppose rough words and blows in the same manner. When Johnson's men rode through the street the women kept within doors, not wishing to hear the rough compliments which the "Greens" were free in bestowing.

David, backed by his four stout men, rode straight to the Royal George, and called upon the landlord to bring him a cup of brown ale, and the same for each of his men. As he paid him the reckoning, he demanded whether the stranger was yet in the house. As he asked the question, that person came out on the porch, dressed as a civilian, and armed with the dress-sword worn by gentlemen at that period.

"Well met," said David. "I was asking after you, my friend."

"Have you any thing to say to me?" demanded the stranger, directing a keen glance at the lieutenant.

"Ay. We met a few days since, and I gave you a warning that it would not be the last time. Then I attempted to arrest you, and failed. To-day I have come to arrest you, and I shall *not* fail. My men have orders to shoot you down if you resist. Yield."

The stranger stepped back a few paces, and drew his sword. "I shall not yield to any unjust demand. Let me know your authority for this step. Have you a warrant?"

"I have."

"By whom is it signed?"

"By Sir John Johnson."

"Let me see it."

David thrust his hand into his bosom, and drew out a paper, which he placed in the hands of the other. He read it carefully, and found it a warrant duly signed by Sir John, authorizing his arrest. He returned his sword to its sheath, and signified his readiness to yield to their demands. They had taken his horse from the stable, and he was just about to mount and go with them by virtue of the warrant, when loud cries gathered the Sons of Liberty; and before the five horsemen could get out of the street, an angry crowd had gathered about them, which hustled their horses here and there, pushed in between them and the prisoner, and in various other ways signified their disapproval of the whole proceeding. Their object was evidently to gain time, and many minutes had not passed, when the two sons of Edward Connor appeared, pressed their way into the crowd, and demanded what was meant.

"I am arrested by the warrant of Sir John Johnson," cried the stranger.

"The cause needs you," said Dick, in an earnest tone.

"Dare you risk a shot by escaping now?"

"Try me."

Dick gave a signal to the crowd, and pushed his horse into the space between his brother and the prisoner. David's sword was out, and he was angrily crying out against resisting the authority of the king, while the stranger sprung into the saddle hastily. His appearance was greeted by a shot from David, and the bullet whistled through his cap. Without waiting for another shot he turned the head of the fine

black gelding he rode, and dashed down the street with a shout, while the crowd impeded the progress of the horsemen, greeting them with any but kindly epithets. "I know thee, black Dave! Do you think we would trust you and your gang with a prisoner all the way to Johnson's Hall? You'd murder him by the way," cried one. "Out upon you for a false knave!" said a stalwart blacksmith, as David fired a second pistol after the retreating horseman who was seen to reel in his saddle. A cry of horror went up from the street, but he did not fall, and turned the corner with a loosened rein.

Two minutes after, David Connor and his men broke through the ranks of the Sons of Liberty, and started in pursuit. But they found that the black horse trotted two miles to their one, and that the chance of catching him was fruitless. They drew rein and turned to go back to the town. Fifteen minutes after they heard the thunder of coming hoofs, and turning in their saddles, they saw the black horse of the stranger, with blood upon the saddle and a broken rein, go by at a fearful pace.

"Back, men!" cried David. "The devil this man serves so well hath delivered him into our hands. I thought I hit him with that last shot."

They gave their horses free rein, and flew back over the road they had lately traveled. A mile further on, they came to a spot where the soil was bloody as if a man had fallen. But the man they sought was nowhere in sight. The place was just upon the river-bank, which ran swiftly at this point. They could see where he had dragged himself to the water's edge, to a spot where a thicket of willows overhung the stream. Had he thrown himself into the water, in the paroxysm of pain, or had he preferred death to the chance of capture? At least, he had not left the bank; that was certain. David rode up to his father's house, which was in sight just up the river, and demanded if he had seen the stranger pass. He had not, and the horsemen returned, and rode slowly down the river, looking everywhere for the body of the stranger, but in vain.

The last ball from the pistol of Dave had indeed struck the flying man in the shoulder, inflicting a painful wound. He

had kept his saddle, however, as long as the horsemen continued the chase ; but when they pulled up in despair, his unnatural strength forsook him and he reeled and fell from his seat. He fainted and remained senseless until he heard the sound of the hoofs of Connor and his men. Dragging himself to the water's edge, he threw himself into it, and creeping along to the thicket of willows, he laid himself prostrate up to his shoulders in water, holding on by a root. Here he lay while the Tories stood above him on the bank and made conjectures on his probable fate. He waited until they rode away and then crept cautiously out, and by main strength raised himself to the bank, where he again lost his senses from loss of blood.

How long he had lain in this situation he did not know, but when he came to his senses his first feeling was that of rest and ease, and that a beautiful girl was bending over him with a strange commiseration expressed in her face. Satisfied that this was a dream, he closed his eyes again, and when he opened them he saw her still before him.

"You are badly hurt," she said. "Remain very quiet until I call my father. I shall not be gone a moment. It is a good thing you got into the water ; it stopped the bleeding."

He had not strength to answer her, so he bowed his head, and she hurried away. It seemed a long time to him before she came back, accompanied by her father and four stout slaves carrying a mattress. They lifted him gently and laid him on this, and then carried him to the house, where his wound was attended to by Mr. Connor, who had some knowledge of gunshot wounds, having dabbled in surgery. It did not require much skill to attend to this wound, which was all in the flesh. It was not the wound itself so much as the loss of blood that had weakened the stranger.

He lay there in a half-dreaming way through the long evening, watching the graceful figure of his nurse as she glided to and fro, and wondering if among all the beautiful women he had seen in his day there was one to compare with her. When the candles were lighted she sat near a small table reading, rising from time to time to arrange his pillows or give him drink.

"How long must I lie here?" he said, as she gave him a cool draught.

"I can not tell," she replied. "Father says you are very weak."

"I have a good constitution; I can not be kept down long by a flesh wound."

"You have lost a great deal of blood. How did you get your wound?"

"I was shot at by a fellow named Connor, a lieutenant of Sir John Johnson's. He arrested me but was separated by the crowd."

She clasped her hands. "Connor! Was it David?"

"That is the name. Do you know him?"

"Alas, yes," she said, in a mournful tone.

"Perhaps you are his friend and think I have got only my due for trying to escape from arrest?"

"Oh, sir; do you not know? He is my brother. I am sorry to say it, but it is so."

"Do you think as he does?"

"No. He is ready to do any work for Sir John Johnson. I think the baronet is a bad man."

"You have other brothers?"

"Do you know them?"

"Yes. It was by their aid I escaped to-day. Trust me, two such brothers as these are more than an offset for the wickedness of one. I have made your brother my bitter enemy. I am sorry for it now. Do not let the thought of what he is grieve you. He is not worth a tear from your bright eyes. Perhaps he will come to his senses. Then these other brothers of yours are noble fellows, and true Sons of Liberty. Trust me, the day will come when there will be a struggle for freedom in this land, and your brother Richard will fight on the side of freedom. He is a true, brave man, with love of country deeply implanted in his heart. When the war-drum is sounded, as it will be before many years, he will be ready. So will your younger brother, who in his quiet way, is as brave a lad as Richard."

Miriam's cheek kindled at the praise of her favorite brothers. "I am glad you know our Dick," she said, earnestly. "Dick is the bravest man I know. He is afraid of nothing. He

saved the life of David once when he was struggling with a panther, and was nearly killed himself. They brought him home bloody from head to foot, and I thought he was dead. You saw that scar upon his cheek?"

"Yes. It looked like a saber-cut."

"It was laid open by the claw of the panther. But after all he has done, I am afraid poor David hates him, and is envious of him because every one thought him the bravest of the family. John is the *best* boy; slow to anger and ready to spare, but strong and brave too. Richard is very quick in his anger, and so is David. But what did you mean by saying that the war-drum would sound? Is not the power of France, in this new world, broken forever?"

"Yes, I hope it is. I was not speaking of that. I mean that Charles Townsend, and men of his stamp, will keep on their wicked course until they drive us, who have been true friends of England, to rebel. We will take up arms to defend our liberties, and we will fight for them to the bitter end. My family will stand by the country and not by Parliament."

"I hope the time may never come."

"Amen! But it will. Take my word for it. The Sons of Liberty know the feeling all through the country. It is universal. A desire to resist oppression even to the death."

"You are getting excited," said Miriam, mildly. "You must not talk; if you would like it, I can read to you a while."

"If you would be so kind."

"It will be a pleasure."

The libraries were not very extensive in those days, and Miriam's was no exception to the general rule. She had the Bible, some religious works, and the works of William Shakespeare, a cumbrous edition. She took the latter and read the "Tempest." He lay silent, watching her sweet face, and saw how she adapted her voice to character, whether as Ferdinand or Miranda, Prospero or Caliban, Ariel or Stephano, the drunken butler. She read the noble old play from beginning to end, and when she had finished he thanked her for her courtesy, and, soon after, fell asleep.

Next morning he woke refreshed, and Connor looked to his

ounds, expressing his anger when he heard that his son had inflicted the hurt. Dick came in to see him, and John sat for over two hours at his bedside. They took pains to caution the negroes against telling off the farm that the stranger was at the house, adding that they would suffer if any one heard of it. The most that they had to fear was that some of Miriam's suitors would find out that he was here. Under these circumstances, it was determined to remove him as quickly as possible. Richard had taken possession of the black horse when he came into Schenectady, saying that he knew where to send him, and took him up to the farm to keep until he could send him to his master. He encouraged the report spread by David in the town that he was dead, and many people believed him, and the Sons of Liberty mourned for a true friend gone. No one could tell who he was. Those who said he was one of the Schuylers were most favored, for the blood of the Schuylers was revered through the Mohawk country.

After the stranger had been at the farm for a week, he expressed himself able to travel, and it was decided among the good people that he had better go. David had been at the house once, but did not come into the room where the stranger lay. Indeed, Richard got up a quarrel with him before he crossed the threshold, which soon drove him away. But he might come again at any time, and it was thought advisable to get the stranger away. So, one fine morning, the black horse was brought out and every thing was ready. But, when he had bidden every one else good-by, he could not find Miriam.

"I can not go without bidding my kind nurse good-by," said he. "Where has she gone?"

"She's down by de spring," said a negro boy. "Massa will pass it if he goes up the river."

"Go with him, Pomp," said Richard, "and show him the spring. Ride on, sir, and we will come after you in a few moments. There is something the matter with my saddle-girth."

Waving his hand in graceful farewell, the stranger rode away, with Pomp running by his side. The boy pointed out the spring, received a piece of money with a grin of delight,

and a "tankee, massa," and ran back to the house. Miriam was seated upon a green bank by the spring, with her head resting on her hand in a pensive attitude, as he rode up. She looked at him quickly and a flush mounted to her cheek.

"How is this?" he said, dismounting, and throwing his bridle over a swinging limb. "Did you mean to let me go away without saying good-by?"

"No," she replied, rising and giving him her hand. "I did not think you would go away so very quickly. Have you far to ride? I am afraid your business has suffered sadly on account of this wound."

"Do you think I shall ever be sorry for it? No. I shall bless the day when your brother sent a bullet through my shoulder. Do you know why?"

She hung her head.

"I will tell you. I should not have seen you and been under your gentle care for a week. I am afraid I have been a sad hypocrite. I might have gone on my way three days ago, if nothing kept me but this scratch in my shoulder."

"Have you far to go?"

"The way will seem long to me, for I shall be going away from you. I must go to Fort Schuyler."

"Do you come from that section?"

"Yes."

"You have forced us to be very formal while you have been among us by not giving us a name by which to call you. You are going away now and we shall have none to remember you by."

"You may call me Edgar."

"Mr. Edgar--"

"No; not that. I like to hear the plain name from your lips."

"It is not a surname. I am not accustomed to call you gentlemen by their Christian names upon so short acquaintance," she said, with dignity.

"I had hoped—I thought," he stammered, "that you had come to regard me in the light of a friend."

"I shall be glad to do so. You have thought proper to keep your name from us. We are humble people, though of good blood. You have no doubt a good reason to keep your name a secret."

"I have, indeed," he said, eagerly. "Believe me, it is no fault of mine. My family do not wish to be known by name yet as stirring up the people against British tyranny. For this reason, and no other, I have kept my name a secret. I have not been known because my life has been that of a soldier, and I have been away in other lands, fighting the battles of England. I shall do so no more, and, if need must, I will fight against her with all the power I have."

"I thank you for your explanation," said the girl. "I was sure you had no wrong motive in concealing your name. I hope, some day, to know you by it."

"You are too kind. I had hoped—but no matter. Your brother is coming. Once again, good-by. The time may come when I can be of service to you. When it comes, call on Edgar—I had very nearly given my name! Good-by once more." He raised her hand to his lips, kissed it, mounted and rode on by Richard's side.

CHAPTER V.

MIRIAM'S LOVER.

THE days of the stamp-act were over, and as the stranger had said, the Parliament proceeded to worse acts of tyranny. Troops were landed in Boston, with bayonets fixed, as if entering a hostile town. The blood of brave men had been shed in the streets of the city, by the hand of hireling soldiery. The General Congress had met at Philadelphia, bearing such names as Washington, Henry, Richard Henry Lee, the Rutledges, John and Samuel Adams and the like, immortal in American history. They did their work so well that Chatham said:

"When your lordships look at the papers transmitted to us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness and wisdom, you can not but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must avow, and I have studied the master-states of the world, I know not the people or Senate, who, for solidity of reason, force of sagacity, and wisdom of

conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, can stand in preference to the Delegates of America, assembled in General Congress at Philadelphia."

Notwithstanding the active support they received from the great commoner, the English continued their hostile preparations. Gage, in Boston, seized all the powder and ammunition upon which he could lay his hands, while on the other hand, the Sons of Liberty organized themselves into minute-men, ready to start up at a moment's warning. Rumors were about that the royal fleet had attacked Boston, and these men rose by hundreds and hastened toward the city. Gage determined to fortify Boston. This was easily done, and it roused the people to action. They began to seize ammunition at various points and convey it to places of safety. The Massachusetts Assembly met and acted in a manner wholly unprecedented, refusing to disband at the order of Gage. The Committees, known as those of Safety and Supplies, decided to enlist twelve thousand minute-men, and asked the other New England Colonies to raise the number to twenty thousand. Washington, as the highest military authority, was invited to visit various parts of the country, upon review days. A few days more, and then came Lexington and Bunker Hill!

The ball was opened, and Richard and John Connor began to act. They organized in the vicinity of Schenectady a company of minute-men, to restrain any attempt on the part of Johnson's men to commit outrages upon the people, and to take part in the battle when New York should take her stand. The Highlanders also still clung to the fortunes of the Johnsons, and were loud in threats of what they, "the handy chiefs," would do if the people about them made trouble for the king. As is to be supposed, such men as Richard Connor and his brother were not to be frightened easily, and their preparations went on. Many of the Mohawks, who, since the time of old Sir William, were the firm friends of the English, came down the river and joined the baronet at the Hall. Sir Guy Johnson, the son-in-law of the dead baronet, had also come down and much trouble was feared. In this extremity, much was hoped for from the influence of the Schuyler family, who were as widely known as the Johnsons. It was

partly with this idea that Philip Schuyler was made Major-General. No one knew the state of affairs in New York better than he, and he at once sent his messengers over the country to acquaint themselves with the designs of the Tory aristocracy. They reported that Sir John and his brother-in-law were indeed tampering with the Mohawks, and would succeed in alienating them from the colonists.

The feuds between old neighbors had begun already. David Connor came no more to his father's house except to make threats of what he would do if his brothers did not join the royal cause, which they did not intend to do. In these visits he was often accompanied by his lieutenant, (for he was a captain now,) a nephew of John Johnson, named from the brother-in-law, Guy Johnson. Ill-natured people pointed to the dark cheeks of the young man and said he got his color from an Indian mother. His real mother no one had ever seen. He passed as an adopted son to Guy Johnson, and was feared and hated by the Mohawk Whigs. He was the special friend and companion of David Connor and equally disliked. He had seen the Mohawk beauty, and became desperately enamored of her. From that time he came often alone to the farm-house and was coldly received by all, especially by the brothers, who, like all good Whigs, hated the Johnsons. At last he was forbidden the house by Richard, which was the occasion of a fierce quarrel between them.

"Go your own way, Guy Johnson," said the young farmer, "and let us go ours. You can come here for no good, and there is bad blood between the Johnsons and the Whigs."

"Do you forbid me the house?" demanded Guy, fiercely. "Don't you know that I come here as a suitor to your sister? I love her, and would make her my wife."

"That may never be, Guy. The blood of my race shall never mix with that of a Johnson. I tell you, there can be no use in your coming here on such an errand. I have spoken to my father upon this subject and he is quite of my mind. I hope you will understand this and come here no more. Besides, you frighten the girl. She, at least, loses no love upon you."

"Curse you, what do you mean? Is my face that of a demon, to frighten a girl? You made this up to get me

angry, Dick Connor. I do not wish to be angry with you. Let us be friends."

"Impossible," said Dick, sternly. "This is useless, Guy. You know that I am a Whig, heart and soul. You are a Tory, and you were born to the feeling. Is it at all likely that we can ever be friends?"

"I would make a bad enemy," said Johnson, in a threatening tone.

"A worse friend," answered Dick. "Come, don't let me have to repeat what I have said. You are not wanted here. We neither desire your friendship or your enmity, but upon my soul, we prefer the last to the first. I am the enemy of all Tories. So is my brother. My father is too old to take a part in the struggle, but we have his prayers. Our sister is with us, and we will pit the Schuylers and the Connors against Johnson and his friends any day."

"You had better not reject my friendship."

"Don't waste your breath, friend Guy. It is useless. As for the girl, she will speak for herself, if you ask her. I know her feelings in regard to you."

"You belie her," said Guy, hotly.

"*You* belie her, if you say that she has a single feeling in her heart in common with a Johnson Tory."

"Well, well. Take your own course. You shall feel the power you affect to despise. Not only the power of the Johnsons, but that of the Mohawks, will be turned against you. Joseph Brandt will be your enemy. Would he be a good one?"

"Joseph Brandt is a great chief and would not let personal enmity sway him in such a quarrel. As for you and your family, we shall expect them to do their worst against us in this quarrel. I have no time to stay with you longer. Go your way and let it be as far from mine as may be."

Johnson struck his sword-hilt angrily and mounted his horse to look for David, who was a short distance up the river, where he had agreed to meet a Mohawk chief in the interest of Johnson. As he passed the spring he saw the Mohawk beauty, sitting on the bank where she had parted from the stranger, months before. As she saw him, she rose haughtily, and made an attempt to pass him on the way to

the house. But he intercepted her, and begged a moment's time. He had a pressing communication to make, he said. She stopped and stood leaning against a tree, in a very graceful attitude. He dismounted, and attempted to take her hand. But she quietly repulsed him.

"What have you to say to me, sir?"

"Something which I have had in my heart to say ever since we met first. I love you. I have never learned to mask my words, and the plain declaration springs first to my lips. I wish to make you my wife."

"I can hardly believe," said Miriam, "that one who claims to be the son of an English baronet could insult me intentionally, and yet I must either believe this or that your *intellect* is at fault. What particular folly of mine induced you to believe that I would yield to a demand of this kind?"

"Do you take it as an insult, when a man tells you that he loves you?"

"From some men, I should take it as a high honor and answer it so, even while I declined it; but when a Tory, whose every feeling is enmity to my father and brothers' principles, makes such an avowal, I think he must have a very poor opinion of me indeed. Sir, I am a Whig. I glory in it, and would sooner wed that scourge whom they call Thayendanega, than with you, because he lives according to the light he has. Take that for an answer, sir."

"You do me great wrong," said Guy, angrily, putting her back as she attempted to pass him. My love for you is as pure, by heaven, as any man ever felt for a woman. If I am a Tory, as you say, I was brought up in that creed. I do not consider it a disgrace to honor the king who has granted knighthood to my father, and has heaped honors upon our family. We should be worse than ungrateful if we turned upon him now, like hungry dogs, because he asks us to pay a few shillings upon tea, paper and glass. I offer you my hand, not as an insult to you, for I do not think an offer from the son of a baronet such an insult to the daughter of a poor farmer."

"The daughter of a poor farmer, as you call me, rejects such an offer with the scorn it justly merits. I think you had better cease, sir. I warn you that any entreaties you may

make would be unavailing, if you think of making any. Let me pass."

"No, stay. Hear me. I think you are wrong still. I think if you reject me, you might at the least choose a kinder way of doing it. I demand as a right to know if you have any reason for rejecting me."

"I have stated that."

"You have hardly stated any thing. You have insulted me and spoke as if my proposals to you were degrading, while I think they do you honor. Have I a rival? That is what I wish to know."

"Yes."

"His name."

"Every true son of America! Every man who is standing up bravely in the cause of his country, has a claim upon my love and gratitude! I would sooner marry one of these, the poorest man of them all, than be your wife, though you were heir apparent to the crown of England. You have rivals in the true hearts who fought at Bunker Hill, in Putnam and Pomeroy, Prescott and Warren, and the sturdy rank and file who beat back double their number of boasting red-coats! You have rivals in the *heroic dead*, whose deaths be at the door of such men as you. Ah, rivals enough. The time will come, Guy Johnson, when the name of the Tory families of this section will be a hiss and byword in the mouths of good men, while our Schuylers, Montgomerys and Herkimers will shine in characters of light. I seem to be inspired to say this."

"You do well to lay the deaths of these skulking rebels at my door, Miriam Connor. What have I to do with this?"

"Every Tory has to do with it. You should have been *there*, fighting against the enemies of our country. But you were *here*, using your *tongue*, for your hands are slow to strike those who *might strike back again*, against the lovers of their country."

"You have not answered me," said Guy, moodily. "I asked you if you had a lover, and you went into a rhapsody about the ragged army around Boston, and the '*heroic dead at Bunker Hill*'. Will you answer my question?"

"No, I will not. If you had a rival, I should not tell you."

"I must give you good-day, then. But before I go, I tell you as I told your brother not half an hour since, that you have made an enemy to-day. Let the Mohawk Whigs beware of Guy Johnson; and especially let the Connors look out for him. I will be a firebrand among your dwellings."

"You will only be doing what your heart prompts you to do, in that case. I care nothing for your threats. Have you any thing more to say to me?"

He seized her roughly by the arm.

"You may incense me too much, girl. From what I hear, I think I have no rival who is so much to be feared as the hatred of your brothers to every thing true to the king. You have one brother, however, who fights in the true cause. What is to hinder me now from seizing you and taking you away? Once in the Mohawk country, you might pray in vain to be made my wife. You would be mine, mine to do as I chose with. By heaven, I will do it."

His dagger was drawn in a moment, and presented at her breast. "Not a word," he said, in a hoarse whisper, "or it will be the worse for you. Say that you will be my wife, even now, and I will spare you. You need not speak. Nod your head."

She only answered by a look of open scorn, and screamed with all her might. The next instant his hand was over her mouth, stifling her cries. He sprung into the saddle, guiding the horse with his knees, and turned his head up the river, going at racing speed. She struggled to free herself, desperately but unavailingly. The hand was still pressed over her mouth, and the horse dashed on. She was giving up, a sensation of faintness was creeping over her, when a voice cried "halt!" in a loud and commanding tone. Guy saw that a horseman had thrown himself into the path, and that he was better mounted than himself, even if his horse had not a double load to carry. Claspings Miriam about the waist, he allowed her to drop to the ground, and drew his sword with an angry jerk. Miriam saw with joy that the new-comer was the stranger who had given his name as Edgar. His

figure more erect than ever, rose above his adversary like a tower.

"Who are you?" demanded Guy. "Get out of my way. Why do you stop me on the king's highway?"

"It is the king's highway no longer," replied the stranger, coolly. "His Gracious Majesty, King George the Third, has cut off his nose to spite his face. We stand upon free soil, God's sky overhead. I do not address myself to you. Miss Miriam, are you going with this person willingly?"

"I am not," she replied. "He is carrying me away. Save me from him."

The stranger drew his sword. "I hope you will not dispute with me the right to take charge of this lady," said he. "I should be sorry to sully my blade with the blood of such a man."

"Look to yourself," cried Guy, furiously. Their swords crossed with an angry clang, while a smile of contempt was visible on the face of the stranger. His blade seemed charmed. For a few moments he sat like a rock upon his horse, parrying the furious blows of Guy without making any return, though the Tory left himself open to attack. At last the latter lost breath and drew off to get wind.

"I warn you," said the other, calmly, "that if you attack me again, I shall be forced to hurt you. I should not like to do that. You had better go about your business and let me attend the lady home."

Guy spurred at him with a shout. The stranger now took the aggressive. Throwing forward his powerful arm, he astonished the Tory by a display of skill with the sword of which he had never dreamed. Before he well knew what he was doing, the point of the long sword went in under his guard and caught there. A sudden pressure of the dextrous hand followed, and Guy's sword was torn from his grasp and whirled into the air. With a perfect yell of rage, the Tory drew a pistol, and Miriam uttered a shriek. But the stranger threw up the barrel of the weapon just at the right moment, and the next, horse and man went down under the charge of the black horse, rolling over together on the sod. Guy was stunned for a moment, but was on his feet quickly, only to find the sword of the stranger to his throat.

"Yield, you scoundrel! I tell you that if you move hand or foot you are a dead man—yield, I say!"

"What do you want me to do?" demanded Guy, sullenly.

"Mount your horse and ride away. I have nothing to say to you beyond that, Guy Johnson," was the answer.

"You are free with my name. What may yours be?"

"I do not intend to tell you. Mount your horse and be off; I am strongly tempted, even now, to make you take up your sword and fight this quarrel out."

Guy stooped to look at his horse's knee which had suffered some injury. In this position he drew a small pistol from his bosom and fired it at the head of the other. In his haste he missed his aim, and the next moment was struck down by a crashing blow from the heavy basket hilt of his enemy's sword. He then broke Guy's sword, threw the pistols into the river and mounted, taking Miriam upon his saddle-bow.

"Are you going to leave him there?" she said, softly.

"He has a hard head; it will recover soon. Do not give him a moment's thought."

They rode away quickly, leaving Guy lying where he fell. Before they had fairly disappeared he rose, shook his fist after the retreating forms and looked after his weapons. Finding nothing but the broken sword, he mounted the lame horse and walked him up the river, cursing the unlucky fate which had caused him to fall in with the stranger, and wrested the beautiful girl from his grasp.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TORY'S TRIUMPH.

FOR some days all was quiet on the river. The stranger put up at the house of Connor, while Guy Johnson disappeared. Where he had gone no one knew. David was seen from time to time in Schenectady, wearing a gloomy face, in which, however, lurked a satisfied expression, as if he knew that his time was coming. Scouts, sent out by the Sons of Liberty,

came in and reported that Sir John was fortifying his Hall, and had called in his Highlanders and a strong force of Mohawks. They reported that the famous chief, Thayendanegea, was at the Hall, and he had promised to help his brother in this quarrel. Even at this period Brandt was known and feared by the settlers, though he had not yet written out his record in full.

Having no longer any reason to conceal his name, the stranger gave it as Edgar Chambers, a nephew of General Schuyler. He had been an officer in the English army, but hearing of the troubles in America, had thrown up his commission and came home. At the time we have first seen him he was engaged in organizing the Sons of Liberty to resist British aggression; for, like many others, he did not believe the quarrel would end in any thing short of rebellion on the part of the colonies. He was now on a tour through this part of the colony, looking after the Johnsons, who were the especial charge of the Schuylers.

He was warmly received by the Connor family, whose indignation when they heard of the dastardly act of the young Tory knew no bounds. Richard was determined at first to mount and ride to the place where Guy had fallen, hoping to find him there; but Miriam would not let him go. Edgar Chambers joined her, saying that he had no doubt the fellow was gone by this time. A week was spent in reviewing Richard's company of riflemen, which was rapidly rising in efficiency, and in getting new recruits. At the same time, nearly all the more virulent of the Tories were gone most of the time, and it was not doubted by any of the Whigs that they were at the Hall, being drilled for the coming struggle. The reason why most of the first fighting was done out of New York is apparent. The king in his act of restriction had excluded New York, North Carolina and Georgia, hoping to beguile those powerful colonies back to his side. For this reason his agents were slow to begin hostilities in this colony. But, seeing that it was not willing to betray the other colonies, the Tories began their work.

Although the Whigs took some precautions, it was not thought necessary to take particular care in guarding the houses. One dark night, the Connor family were roused by a

sudden tumult in front of their house and an abrupt demand to open the door. Rising and going to the window Richard saw that the whole space in front of the house was filled with Highlanders and Indians.

"What do you want?" he demanded of the man who was pounding at the door.

"Open, in the king's name."

"Who are you?"

"David Connor. You had better open the door." Richard went down and opened it, going outside himself, and closing it quickly behind him.

"What do you want here, Dave?" he demanded.

"Lucky for you that it isn't yourself," replied David. "I hear that you have a stranger here. Who is he?"

"He is a gentleman from the upper country. What is that to you?"

"Oh, nothing much. Only Sir John and Sir Guy have got some very particular business with this gentleman from the upper country, and have sent me to take him. Sorry to deprive you of your guest, my dear brother, but when duty calls you *know* we must obey. Do me the favor to trot out this gentleman for inspection."

"If I had thirty of my boys here you should fight for him," said Richard. "Were you born without a heart, David?"

"Can't say. Where is this man?"

"Here," said a stern voice. David uttered a yell of terror, and covered his face with his hands. The man whom he thought dead was before him, and for a moment, in spite of his strong nerves, he thought he saw a spirit; but his good sense triumphed.

"So you escaped death that day?"

"I escaped."

"I thought I was done with you forever. However, I now arrest you in the king's name."

"The king's name was a tower of strength once. It is no longer. Try some other name."

"Do you refuse to yield? Men, make ready, take aim."

"He surrenders," said Richard, hurriedly. "Keep back your men, Dave, he will yield. You had better, sir; there is nothing to be gained by refusing to give up."

"I surrender," said Edgar. "As you say, they are too strong for us. What do you intend to do with me?"

"You shall be taken to the Hall. Sir John wishes to examine you himself."

"Let me say good-by to these kind friends; your parents, I believe. They have two worthy sons; would I could say as much for a third. I look to you, Richard, to see that no wrong is done me, and if you feel strong enough at any time, break my prison bars. Good-by, friend John; good-by, respected sir. I am sorry to be the cause of rousing you from your slumbers. Tell Miss Miriam—ah, she is here."

Miriam entered at this moment in a loose habit, thrown hastily about her. She cast a terrified glance over the faces of the Highlanders and Indians, and demanded what this meant.

"It means," cried Guy Johnson, suddenly stepping to the front, "that I have not by any means forgotten the insults you heaped upon me scarcely a week ago. It means that I have kept an eye on the redoubtable champion who broke my sword after he had disabled me by a cowardly blow."

"You acknowledge to my face," said Richard, "that you attempted to abduct my sister, because she would not listen to your vile suit. What is to hinder me now, Guy Johnson, from killing you where you stand?"

"Brother!" cried Miriam.

"Richard!" said his father.

"What is to hinder? The knowledge that if you lift a hand against me, my Highlanders will cut you into a thousand pieces. I was not fool enough to come here without protection. But we have no time for fooling here, Dave."

"You are right. Where is this man's horse?"

"You had better give them your name," said Mr. Connor. "It may bring you good treatment."

"From a Johnson? No. I will tell my name only to Sir John or his brother-in-law."

The black horse was brought out and Edgar mounted, after bidding Miriam good-by. When they turned to go back into the house, they found her lying senseless upon the hall floor. "Poor girl," muttered Richard; "I fear she

has set her heart upon the lad. Be gentle with her, John. Lift her up, so. Now, lay her on the bed. Mother, see what you can do with her. She loves him, I am afraid. I will kill Guy Johnson."

She recovered after a while, and said the faces of the Indians had startled her; but John thought as his brother did, that she loved Edgar Chambers.

"What will they do with him, John?" she asked her brother, when they were alone.

"Who can tell what a Tory would not do?" said John. "I think the least thing they will do will be to send him to Quebec as a prisoner. He resigned from the British army to join ours. So did Charley Lee and Montgomery. I don't know what they will do with the lad."

The party with their prisoner camped for the rest of the night upon the river a few miles below Schenectady. The Indians made a camp of their own, apart from the white men. Edgar's feet were bound, and he was guarded by four stout Highlanders. Early in the morning they were stirring, and took a hasty breakfast, a portion of which was given to the prisoner. Guy Johnson lost no opportunity of taunting him.

"Do not imagine that we do not know you, Captain Chambers," said he. "We act upon instructions in regard to you."

"You know my name?"

"It seems so."

"It is a good name."

"So is mine."

"Opinions differ. However, such as my name is, I have a right to it in *law*. Can you say the same of yours?"

Guy Johnson turned upon the prisoner, bound as he was, and struck him in the face. In answer, he lifted both bound hands, and dashed them into the face of the coward, with such force that he fell prostrate, with blood starting from his mouth and nose. The Highlanders looked on composedly. In their opinion the fair thing had been done, and a blow had been given in answer to the same. Guy started up foaming, spat out a front tooth, and snatched a bayonet from one of the guards. But they threw themselves in his way.

"*Her* cannot touch *her* prisoner. If *her* be angry, let *her* wait until the shentleman have his hands free."

"Don't interfere with me. Get out of my way, Donald Magee. He has insulted me."

"Plow for plow. Keep pack! If *her* touch *her* prisoner, *her* will pit *her* sword through *her* poty."

"What is this?" demanded David, coming up at this moment. "How now, Donald! Your sword drawn on an officer?"

"*Her* will try to kill *her* prisoner. I ish pit *here* to keep *her*. Donald Magee will do *hish* tuty."

"And right enough. Guy, is it possible that your unbounded hatred of the man leads you to forget you are a gentleman? You must not lay a finger on him. He is *my* prisoner. If any revenge is to be taken I have the best right."

"He struck me."

"Did you not strike *him*? Ah, I thought so. As for that, he struck me once, and I had no chance to return the blow. But to strike an unarmed and bound prisoner, Guy! Come away!"

He took the young man by the arm and hurried him away. "Don't do that again," he said, when out of earshot of the prisoner, "or we will get the Indians mad for blood. It is all the young chief can do to restrain them. If Brandt were here we should have no trouble, but now I am afraid half the time. I wish he would come. There is much to depend on in Joseph Brandt."

"I have heard him say that he did not like this English name. It would seem to be a sort of tacit confession that his blood is not pure."

"Thayendanega is here," said a low, guttural voice. "He is *all* Mohawk. What can a chief do for his young white brothers?"

They turned in surprise, and saw a tall chief, in the dress of the Mohawk tribe, who had come up unperceived and stood beside them. It was the famous chief, Thayendanega, better known in history by the name of Joseph Brandt. He was allied to the Johnson family by marriage, its head, Sir William, having married his sister. For this reason he was

strongly attached to the English, and fought for them in this war. If his habits in warfare were barbarous, he showed some traits of a high and lofty nature. He had been educated in Wheelock's School, since Dartmouth College, at the expense of the Johnsons, who sought by every means to obtain the good will of the Mohawks. He had promised the young men to meet them at this place, to concert measures for the safety of the Hall, which was supposed to be in danger from the anger of the Whigs.

"My young brothers have taken a prisoner," said the wily chief. "It is well. Who is he?"

"It is Edgar Chambers, the young man who fought Guy Johnson by the river."

"That is good. Where did you take him?"

"At my father's."

"Does David love his brothers very much?"

"No," replied the other, bluntly.

"Why did you not take *him*, then? He is to this man as the grown wolf is to the whelp. His teeth are grown. We know that he will do us mischief. He is the very head of the Schenectady Whigs. It seems to me that my young brother would have done very well if he had brought the brother, who is strong as a buffalo, and bound him fast. What is the body when the head is gone?"

"I thought of that, but I didn't dare to go quite so far. I will do it yet, if he keeps on getting these Whigs together. Have you seen Sir John?"

"Yes."

"Where is he?"

"He is at the Hall. The old man who was bound in the strong room has been sent away to his home, and it is ready for your prisoner. Let me ask this young man questions."

"I don't think you will make much by that. He is close mouthed. Beyond the fact that his name is Edgar Chambers, we know nothing of his purpose in coming here. My own idea," glancing at Guy, "is that he is attracted here by my pretty sister. From some hints I have heard dropped from time to time, I think he was picked up by my family, the time I sent a bullet into his shoulder, and smuggled away to a safe place. I don't exactly know where myself. I am

sure, however, that he was there, for according to Guy's story, he seemed to know Miriam very well when they met the other day."

"Curse him."

Brandt advanced to a place immediately in front of the prisoner and called his attention.

"Listen to me," he said. "I am a Mohawk chief, and my name is Thayendanegea. White men call me Joseph Brandt."

Edgar bowed, but did not think it necessary to waste words in speech. The chief paused a moment, to allow his words to have due weight, and then proceeded:

"I am a Mohawk. The land on which we stand is Mohawk land, though white men have taken it to dwell in. We are not of the same blood, white man. We do not think alike. I am a King George man. I have taken his belts and promised to be true to him. What are you doing here?"

"I was brought here against my will."

"Why did you not stay at home?"

"Because I chose to come here. Remember, chief, I was not taken in arms. I was taken out of a peaceful dwelling, in the dead of night, and made no resistance. No one ever heard me say whether I was a friend or enemy of King George. Why am I brought here?"

"Ugh," said the chief. "You speak true words. Sir John will not harm you if you are a friend of King George. It is easy to say so, if you are."

"I do not choose to give an account of my opinions to every one who takes upon himself to ask."

"I am Joseph Brandt," repeated the chief, proudly. "You are on my land. But you were brought here and have a right to refuse to answer. I wish you were a friend of King George, so that I could take off your bonds and have a talk. You are sure you are not a friend of the king?"

"I did not say so."

Thayendanegea smiled as he saw how the young man eluded the trap. They talked a while, and the young soldier was astonished at the education of the chief. After a while they parted, mutually impressed with each other, and the party

took up its line of march for Johnson Hall. They marched steadily, camped at night, and it was some time on the afternoon of the next day when they reached the Hall. Here he was closely confined, to wait the orders of Sir John.

CHAPTER VII.

TOMMY ON THE WAR-PATH.

THREE days after the capture of Edgar, the young man known as Tommy Perkins arrived at Schenectady. He had received orders from Edgar to follow him to this place, for he was in reality one of his followers. When he heard of the capture of the young soldier, his indignation knew no bounds. He sought out Richard Connor and obtained from him a full report of the capture, the persons engaged in it, and where he had been taken. Richard was working earnestly trying to raise men enough in the vicinity of the Hall to force Sir John to give up the prisoner. In the mean time, it was necessary to communicate with him, and Tommy volunteered for the enterprise at once.

As he had taken leave of Johnson Hall upon a former occasion in rather a summary manner, it would be necessary for him to use all the art of which he was possessed in explaining it. But having great confidence in the power of his own tongue, he set out toward the Hall with the greatest sangfroid imaginable.

Johnson Hall was reached some time on the next day, by the aid of the remarkable pony which had carried him upon a previous occasion. He found the aspect of affairs changed considerably by this time, for all the Mohawks who had followed Joseph Brandt were at the Hall, as well as the Highlanders, the tenants of Sir John. Years before, Sir William had surrounded himself with these men from his own country, and they had settled in and about the village of Johnstown. Many of the tenants knew Tommy, and a murmur of surprise ran round the court that he should return after taking such

an abrupt leave not many months before. Word was sent to the baronet of his arrival, and he ordered the boy to be brought to him at once. Sir John was in the same room where they had met before. He was not alone, however. Sir Guy Johnson, his brother-in-law, Colonel Claus, the younger Guy Johnson and David Connor were in the room, seated before a table covered with papers, as if they had been holding a council. They all looked at the youngster as he entered, with any thing but pleasant faces.

"Come close to the table," said Sir John, sternly. Tommy advanced to the head of the table, so that he faced Sir John at the other end, with Colonel Claus on his right hand, and Sir Guy on his left.

"When you were here before," said Sir John, "I asked you some questions, which I am inclined to believe you did not answer truly. I am going to ask you some questions *now*, and I assure you that it will be for your interest to answer promptly and to the point. Do not attempt to deceive us. What was your object in coming here before?"

"Wa-al, I think I told you."

"Once more; what was it?"

"Looking for my unc, the darned old rip. I ain't found him yet."

"I suppose not. You still stick to that. Have you such an uncle in existence?"

"Don't understand such talk as that."

"Have you such an uncle at all?"

"Now that's a hard question. I used to *think* I had. I've looked for the darned old cuss everywhere, and I can't find hide nor hair of him. Maybe he's gone under. If he has, I'll go back to Weathersfield and settle down like a peaceful and law-abiding citizen. Have yew heard any thing about him, square?"

"Have done with this foolishness. Why did you abscond from the Hall that night?"

"Ab— which, square? That are word is beyond me. Don't know what you mean no more than the dead; I don't, surely."

"Why did you run away, you clodhopper?" demanded Colonel Claus, in an angry tone. "Don't pretend to be more

obtuse than nature has made you, I beg. That is quite unnecessary."

"Run away, square?"

"Yes, run away. Don't repeat my words in that manner, you young scoundrel, or I will cut off your ears close to your head, and turn you going. Be very careful, my young friend."

"I wanted to be sure I knew jest what yew said, square. I didn't run away that night. Leastways, I didn't *mean* to run away. The way of it was this. I thought the square, yonder, had used me well, give me a supper and something to drink, so I caught my pony and rode away. I didn't mean to do no harm; I didn't, I swan to man."

"Who sent you here?" asked Sir John.

"Who sent me? Lord, such a question. I'm a traveler, square. I go wherever it comes into my head to go. Fact, by jingo. I heard tell about Johnson Hall, and I wanted to see a real, live baronet—somebody I could say 'Sir' to, and I thought I might find my darned old uncle, so I came."

"Don't let us hear any more about your uncle, young man. What brought you here, now? You certainly knew that your respected relative was not here, this time."

"I *didn't* know. The darned old fool might have come here after I left, just to spite me. If any of yew know a long-legged old cuss called Josiah Perkins, that's the man I want, rot his old hide."

A lurking grin began to be visible about the table, for every one thought that the baronet had met his match. He determined to try a new plan. Rising to his feet, he called in the Highlander, Donald Magee, and ordered him to manacle the boy. Tommy made no resistance, as the irons were placed upon his wrists, holding them up to his eyes, and evidently admiring the beauty of the steel.

"Tell you what, square," he said, "yew goin' tew give these tew me?"

"Yes," said Sir John, laughing. "You are welcome to them."

"Thankee. If I may be so bold, square, I know a way tew make these better. They are pritty things, darned pritty; but this *chain* keeps the wrists tew close together. Wa-al, if that *chain* was off, I'd like 'em better."

"Is it possible that any one can be such a fool as not to understand the use of manacles?" roared Sir John. "Hear me, you young scoundrel. You have come here as a spy, that you may report our movements to these Tryon county Whigs. I know it. We will keep you as a spy, and hang you as the same."

"Darn it all. What's a spy?" asked Tommy, in the most natural tone possible. "You are a darned old liar, and I don't mind telling you of it. My name is Tommy Perkins, and I swear *he* ain't no spy."

"Will you tell us what brought you here?"

"Hain't I told yew, yew cantankerous old varmint? Hain't I said I cum tew see a baronet—a real, live baronet, and to find my uncle? What more dew *yew* want, *say*?"

"This is either the most complete knave or the most complete fool I ever saw," cried Sir John, turning in disgust to the others, "and I am inclined to believe that he is a little of both. Donald, take off those irons."

The Scotchman obeyed, took off the irons, and put them in his pocket. Tommy at once struck him in the face, calling him a darned old thief, and demanded the irons as his property. The officers restrained the ire of the worthy Highlander and told him to give the boy the irons, which he took with great pleasure, and went about the room jingling loudly at every step, and looking daggers at Donald, who regarded the "daft chiel," as he called him, in stupid amazement.

"Be quiet, you donkey," said Colonel Claus, angrily as he could, though laughing in spite of all. "Listen to me, my lad. We are going to get up a king's regiment, one of these days, and we want all the likely boys we can get. What do you say? Will you join us?"

"Go for a sojer? I hain't turned my mind to it. I'd like to think about it."

"That's right, my boy. Here, Donald, take him to the dining-hall and give him something to eat and drink. There is no harm in the fellow, Sir John."

Donald led the youngster out and down to the hall, where he had done such good work once before. Here he dispatched a hasty meal and strolled out into the court, where he was at once surrounded by a group of Tories from the vicinity of

Schenectady and Johnstown, who had seen him at the village. They had many questions to ask of the posture of things in the village.

"What do they say about our taking this Captain Edgar Chambers prisoner?"

"They are especially and essentially angry, I reckon. They are a rambunctious and most *unearthly* crew. They calculate that they can chaw up all the Tories in Tryon county, they dew, by gravy! What will yew dew with this young cap'n?"

"'Tain't decided yet."

"Where is he? Here?"

"Oh, no. He is in jail at Johnstown. The sheriff has him?"

"Good for him. I hope they have got him fast."

"They have, that," said the spokesman. "You had better believe it. But the Sammons family are mad about it, and are raising a great dust in Johnstown. Sir John is going to ride down there to-morrow and see about it. Sir Guy is going, and Colonel Claus, and a lot of our boys."

"I'll go, tew," said Tommy. "I talk about j'ining you, and I want to see how you work. If you crow hearty, and make good work among the Johnstown Whigs, why, then, maybe I'll j'ine."

He had a bed, that night, at the Hall, and next morning joined quite a large cavalcade, which rode down to Johnstown, headed by the two baronets.

"Who are the Sammons family?" asked Tommy, looking at David, who rode at his elbow.

"Curse them," replied the Tory, "they are to this town what my brothers are to Schenectady, with the exception that old man Sammons is as bad as his sons, while my progenitor knows enough to keep quiet. Sampson Sammons, and his two sons, Jacob and Frederick, are the pest of the loyalists of Johnstown. Let them dare to open their mouths to-day."

At this moment a man rode up hastily and addressed Sir John in a low tone. Sir John listened to him with a lowering brow, and then rising in his stirrups, addressed the men who followed him:

"This loyal man says that three hundred Whigs have met at Caughnawaga for the purpose of raising a Liberty-pole, the

emblem of rebellion. Ride on, my brave lads, and gallant gentlemen. We will be at this festival. And as I hope to be saved, if Sampson Sammons dares to speak, or either of his vile sons, I will make them rue it to their dying day. Ride on."

The sabers rattled, and the horsemen went on at a trot. They found the Whigs collected about the liberty-pole, which they had not yet raised. The Whigs were unarmed. Johnson and his men flourished here and there with pistols in their belts and swords at their thighs. Sir Guy Johnson, mounting the stoop of a large building, proceeded to address them. He spoke at some length of the strength and power of the king, and the folly of any attempt on the part of the colonists to revolt against the crown. A single ship, he said, would be able to sink or capture all the navy that could, by any possibility, be set afloat by the colonies; while, on the frontiers, with the Indians under his command, and his arms sustained by an almost uninterrupted chain of military posts, extending from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Mississippi, he would be invincible to any efforts of the colonists. He denounced the agitators in the country in no measured terms, so that the blood of the Whigs boiled in their veins. Standing just in front of the orator was a stout young man, whose face had been growing more angry as Sir Guy proceeded. At last, apparently stung to fury, he struggled nearer the speaker, when he was restrained by a hand upon his arm. A man in the prime of life stood beside him.

"Be quiet, Jacob. Nothing can be gained by breaking out."

"I will try, father," replied the young man. "But he may go too far."

The orator continued, and at length became so abusive that Jacob could bear it no longer. Shaking his brown hand on high at a peculiarly bitter invective, he shouted:

"You are a *liar* and a *villain*! And that I tell you to your teeth, Sir Guy Johnson."

Johnson glared at the speaker for a moment in desperate anger, and then sprung down the steps and seized him by the throat.

"You doubly-damned villain and traitor to your king," he shouted, "do *you* dare to give me the lie?"

"Ay, do I," replied Jacob, seizing him in his strong grasp. They struggled awhile, until Sammons was struck by a loaded whip in the hands of one of Johnson's retainers, and felled to the ground. He was stunned for a moment, but recovering his senses, he found that one of the retainers of Johnson bestrode his body and was trying to hold him down. Freeing one hand, by a single powerful and well-directed blow he succeeded in ridding himself of this incumbrance. He sprang to his feet, threw off his coat, and squared his body for a fight, with sturdy courage, worthy of his good name. David Connor and Donald Magee held pistols to his breast, but before they fired, Sammons was again knocked down and severely beaten. The Whigs, who had not come here prepared to fight, withdrew, with the exception of the brother and father of the fallen man, and three other families, now well known in that part of the State. Jacob Sammons, when he went home to his father's house, bore upon his body the first wounds of the Revolutionary contest in Tryon county.

Tommy did not return to the Hall with the party of the baronet. Having learned in some manner that the Sammons family would aid him in what he had to do, he made his way to their house. He found them seated with stern faces upon the benches outside the door of the dwelling. In some way best known to the Sons of Liberty, Tommy satisfied them of his truth, and they sat down together.

"The first blow has been struck," said Sampson Sammons, taking the pipe from his mouth. "Who will strike the next?"

"That remains with you to say," said Tommy. "If you are men, you will not see a true Son of Liberty confined, when it is in your power to aid him."

"I will not," said Sampson Sammons.

"I will not," said his two stout sons. "Who do you mean? What can we do?"

"Captain Chambers, a Son of Liberty, and one who left the service of the tyrant to join our army, is in prison at Johnstown, and ought to be set at liberty."

"He will be," said Sampson Sammons, rising to his feet. "Jacob, take Black Jane and ride for life or death. Rouse all the Whigs you know, and tell them what you want them to

cc. Have them go armed. They shall find no child's-play here. Will you go with us?"

"Till I die!" said Tommy, "if you think I had better; but to tell you the truth and nothing but it, I think I can dew yew better service at the Hall. Sir Guy wants me to join their force. Now, yew are a red-hot Whig, so I don't mind tellin' yew that General Schuyler is coming up here in a few days, and he is going tew give them particular Jesse up tew the Hall. Yew Whigs will have tew come out. Now, if I am up tew the Hall, I kin tell yew all that happens, so I don't think I better show this time, unless I pretend to fight ag'inst yew."

"You are right; they will need you at the Hall. Will you go to-night?"

"Not till I see this out. When yew have got Cap'n Edgar safe, then I'll go. Can you get men enough?"

"You shall see. There goes Jacob on the full gallop. The boy feels the smart of his wounds and will ride hard. Frederick, take horse and rouse the Fondas and Herkimers up the river. Do not miss a man. We will have this Captain Chambers out of jail, or lie with him this night."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RESCUE.

CAPTAIN CHAMBERS, when first taken, was kept for a time in the oak chamber at Johnson's Hall. Soon after, there was a meeting of officers and it was decided to hand him over to the civil authorities, if they could find a man base enough to aid them in their designs. The plea upon which he was imprisoned was an assault upon David Connor, while endeavoring to arrest him. The Johnsons found a man every way fitted for their designs in the sheriff of the county, a creature of Sir John', named Black. This fellow came up to the Hall, arrested the young officer in due form and took him down to the jail, where he lodged him in a strong room, even taking

pains, in his meanness, to iron him heavily. The young man regarded the efforts to annoy him with sturdy indifference, thanking the sheriff for his courtesy and promising to repay it in kind before many days.

It was irksome to him, a young man, just beginning to make himself useful in a great cause, to be shut up in a dirty jail, on a pretext which could never stand in law, since David Connor had no warrant to arrest him at the time he received the blow which had roused his anger. Guy Johnson, his enemy, came to see him after he had been three days in the jail, to taunt him with his power over him. He came in company with David, for the two were together constantly now, and sat down, as he said, for a little confidential talk, while Sheriff Black looked in at the door.

"I demand to know," cried Edgar, starting as nearly erect as he could, "by what right you allow these fellows to intrude upon my privacy? I am your prisoner, but I have nothing to say to such men as these."

"Go out and close the door, sheriff," said Guy. "And, on the whole, Dave, I think you had better go too and leave me alone with this young chap, who is going to have nothing to say to such as you and I. As if he could help it, poor fellow."

"You must promise, before I go, to keep your hands off him. Curse him, he has a bitter tongue, and he well knows how to use it. You will promise this?" said David.

"I will. Go out, Dave, and leave us together."

David complied, and the key rattled in the lock. As this was done, Guy turned to the prisoner. His face was flushed, but there were white dints coming and going as if his anger must show itself somehow.

"Well met," said he. "Do you know *why* I have come here to-day?"

"I think I do. You have come here to gloat over me in bonds, to feast your eyes upon the prostrate form of one who would make you shrink and tremble if his hands were free. What have you to say to me?"

"A great deal. First, I hate you. I asked that girl, who, but for you, would now be mine, whether I had a rival. She told me no. But she *lied*!"

"Oh, coward, coward! Would that my hands were free for a single moment."

"She lied, I tell you. Perhaps she did not know her own heart, but she lied. She loves *you*, or thinks she does."

"I wish such a villain could by any possibility speak truth, so that I could have an excuse for believing you," said Edgar. "If it were possible, you could not bring me more joyful tidings."

"Ah. But I did not come to give you joy. Your trial will be the greater when it comes. I tell you this, so that you may take the rest more to heart. When you get free from the hands of the law, you will go to her, but you will go in vain. She will not be there to greet you."

"What do you mean?" demanded Edgar, quickly. "But I forget. You can have no thought in coming here but to make me angry and to lie. You can do Miriam Connor no harm. She has protectors, before whose strong, earnest natures your cowardly soul would shrink affrighted. As for myself, I give you good warning, and you had better take it to heart. Once free from this prison I will follow you and never rest until I have the satisfaction of a gentleman for the insults you have put upon me. Who are you? You claim the blood of the Johnsons, I believe rightly; but the law will not give you that right."

"Twice before this time," said the young Tory, "you have said I have no right to my name. I understand your allusion and it is true. The blood of a Mohawk chief, old Nickus Brandt, flows in these veins. It is the unforgiving blood of the red-man which makes my cheek a little darker than my fellows. But, when you say I have no right to the name of my father, you lie in your teeth. The insult will never be forgotten nor forgiven by me. I will see your blood flow after I have wrenched your heart for the loss of Miriam Connor. I will kill you."

"Threats are useless," said the young soldier. "I have met you, hand to hand, and you are a plaything to me. Do you think I fear you? But explain yourself. Are you coward enough to wreak upon a weak girl the vengeance you dare not execute upon a man? Do not dare to injure Miriam Connor, if you value your life at all."

"I have come to bid you good-by," replied Guy; "for many days I shall be very busy. These accursed Whigs are planting the liberty-tree in every town in the colony. We will make them rue it, in the very dust."

"The power of England has passed away forever," answered Edgar. "The time was, when, by a little conciliation, she might have made us fast friends instead of her enemies. But now, the time will never come when we shall submit to British rule."

"You shall, by heaven. What is your family to ours in power, Captain Chambers?"

"The name of Schuyler will never be linked with the symbols of oppression. All the Germans and Dutch of the Valley are on our side. Only a portion of the English side with you. Sir John's Highlanders are the objects of scorn and loathing. They have not long to stay in New York if they continue to make this country the scene of disgraceful broils. But I have done. If you have said all you wish to say to me, I desire to be left alone."

"You shall be. I commend you to the kindness of my friend Black. He will see to your comfort."

"He has attended to that already," said Edgar, bitterly, looking down at his manacled limbs. "You may thank his care that you have not felt the weight of my hand already in this interview."

"No doubt. Ho, here, Black! Open the door. I have staid quite long enough with my young friend, who is getting angry, I am sorry to say."

Black came and opened the door, giving the prisoner some dinner, at the same time. He was kept in solitary confinement until the evening of the day upon which the Sammons had arranged to free him. He became conscious, toward night, that something unusual was going on in the town. Many feet could be heard passing the window, at various times, and he heard his own name coupled with that of the sheriff in terms not particularly complimentary to Mr. Black, who was very unpopular in the town. In fact, the first liberty-pole ever erected at German Flats was cut down by him, at the head of a band of royalists. Some days before, the committee of the people had met, deposed him from his office, and

appointed a sturdy Whig in his place. But, backed by Sir John Johnson, he had continued to exercise the functions of the office contrary to justice and the law.

Hearing his name, Edgar dragged himself to the little barred window of his prison and looked down into the street. About fifty men had collected, armed with muskets, for what purpose he could not tell. At their head strode the sturdy Whig known as Sampson Sammons. He advanced to the door of the jail and knocked heavily. No answer came from within.

"Hold up the torches, men," said Sampson, "and let me take a peep through the bars."

His eldest son advanced with a torch and held it high above his head. Sampson drew himself up to the hight of the window-sill and looked into the hall of the jail. A lamp was burning on a rough table, but no one was there. Sampson applied his mouth to the key-hole and shouted the name of Alec Black, the sheriff. No voice replied as the old jail rung with the sturdy voice of the patriot.

"Will you come to the door?" again shouted Sampson. "Ye had better, Alec. We will do ye no harm, but the captain we will have, and that's the end of it."

"If he was here," said one of the Fonda family, "he has gone out of the back window. Let's burst the door."

"Axes here," said Sampson.

A long-armed fellow, with an ax in his hand, advanced to the door of the jail, and struck his blade into it, leaving it standing in the wood while he spat upon his hands and took a deep breath. Then it gleamed above his head again and the splinters began to fly. But it was a stout, oak door and resisted bravely for a time, and he stood aside for another ax-man. In the mean time, others of the men had cut down a small tree and lopped off the branches about a foot from the body, so as to give a good hold for the hands. Ten men placed themselves upon each side of this convenient ram and marched up to the door.

"Stand aside, John," said Sampson. "Let them try it with the sapling. Now. Take hold of her! Swing her once! Swing her twice!! Swing her three times, and into her!!!"
What mere carpenter work could stand against such a blow

The stout door flew from its hinges, and they burst into the hall with a shout that made the rafters tremble.

"Hurrah for Captain Chambers and the Continental Congress! Down with Alec Black! Confusion to the Johnsons and their Highland thieves!" were the exclamations which filled the house. Edgar began to understand that they had come to aid him, and his heart gave a wild throb of joy as he answered the cheer with a loud "amen."

"Keep your eyes at the key-holes, lads," said Sammons, "and when you see a room with any one in it, go in. Or, keep still a moment. Hoy! Every man; quick! Captain Chambers, let us hear your voice."

"Here!" shouted Edgar. Sammons was at the door in a moment. "Now be easy, captain," he said, "and we will have you out of this in no time at all. Here, John, bring your ax. I will soon burst this lock."

The person addressed gave the ax to his leader, who inserted the edge between the door and the casing and pressed hard upon the handle. The door yielded a little and he pushed the blade further in, while a blacksmith who stood near with a hammer on his arm struck the door near the lock. It broke with a loud crash and the door was open. "You are free," cried Sammons, bursting into the room. "Come out under God's blue sky and thank Him that he hath sent you friends."

Edgar held out his manacled hands and honest Sammons groaned in sympathy. "This is what it is to be true to your country," he said. "Good friends, we have fallen into strange times. Jonas Carter, have you a file?"

"I have better than that," said the blacksmith. "I have a picklock here with which I could open the best lock in the thirteen colonies. Stand forward, sir, where the light of the torch can reach you and I will soon set you free."

He took a little steel instrument from his pocket with which he shot back the bolt of the fetters and Edgar Chambers was free. It was a strange scene and one not likely to be lightly rated by the actors in it. They had struck the first blow against the authority of the king and were marked men from that hour. Edgar shook hands with as many of his unknown friends as could get near him, saying aloud:

"I thank you all, good friends, and will not forget what you have done. Am I wrong, sir, or do I see before me Sampson Sammons?"

"Sammons is my name," said the Whig.

"Let me take your hand again. I am not unknown to you by reputation, and let me assure you that the Sons of Liberty in the cities have heard *your* name and are witness to your good deeds."

"As I stand here, to hear you say so more than repays any little service I have done. Sir, I am a farmer, and my hands are hard with labor; and such as they are, they are for the service of the Congress; God bless its members, and teach them how to do right. But, this is not the time for idle words. We have another purpose to-night, besides setting you at liberty, if there is time. We will rouse old Black from his nest, and ride him on a rail, the old scoundrel. Will you come with us?"

"If you will take my advice you will use no violence which might react to the prejudice of our cause," said Edgar. "It would be far better for them if they had not been so harsh with our men."

"You may be right. Nevertheless, we must rout him out of the town, for he is a pestilence here. We must remove him."

"Do as you please about that. I will go with you, not, however, as your leader, but to see that no violence is done to the man, though he has used me ill."

"The time will come, captain, when the worst we could do to him would be child's play compared with the suffering which would fall upon the Whigs of the three valleys, Mohawk, Cherry and Schoharie. I am a prophet in this. They will let loose the full power of the Mohawks upon us, and the warriors of the other nations will follow readily such a chief as Brandt."

They passed out of the jail and hurried together to the house of Black. Hearing them coming, the obnoxious sheriff barred the door and presented himself at an upper window, where Sampson Sammons demanded his surrender.

"Is that you, Sammons?" cried Black, leaning out of the window.

"Ay," replied the stout Whig. "No other."

"Take that, then," shouted the sheriff, firing a pistol at the speaker. The bullet whistled close to his ear, and, as the Tory drew in his head, forty or fifty muskets were discharged with no other effect than a slight flesh wound, though the window was riddled in every direction. This was the first shot fired west of the Hudson during the Revolution. It was unlucky that they fired together at the sheriff, as the discharge was heard at the Hall, and Sir John at once discharged a musket as a signal to his retainers and Scotch partisans. This was known to the Whigs, and, as he could gather five hundred men against them in a very short time, and as their own number for the present was small, they prudently gave up their designs upon the sheriff.

"You must have a horse," said Sammons. "Jacob, where is Black Jane?"

"Tied under the tavern shed," replied Jacob.

"Bring her here," said the old man.

The young man hurried away, returning soon after upon the back of the mare, upon which he had ridden to rouse the Whigs for the rescue of the young captain. "Dismount," said the elder Sammons. Jacob got down without a word and placed the bridle in his father's hand.

"I speak for my sons and myself, sir, when I say that if we never see the mare again you are welcome to her. But, if you find any means to return her to us, we should be glad to have you do it, as she is a favorite horse with my son Jacob."

"I accept your courtesy," said Edgar, throwing himself into the saddle. "And if ever I—"

"This is no time for idle speeches," interrupted the other. "Away, sir, and God guide you."

"Good-by, then, friends. We shall meet again soon," said Edgar, turning the mare's head down the street, while the Johnsons could be heard gathering at the Hall. "Scatter!" said Sammons. "Every man for himself." So well was this obeyed, that in ten minutes not a Whig could be seen in the streets of Johnstown.

CHAPTER IX

LOST.

CAPTAIN EDGAR CHAMBERS rode straight towards Schenectady. The words of his enemy had made him aware of his own feelings: he knew that he loved Miriam Connor, and could not rest until he had seen her and told her his love. Down the rich valley of the Mohawk he rode, through the clear night, singing snatches of love-ditties, and wondering if any one under the universal arch could be as happy as he. If the enemy had spoken truth, and he believed that he might have done so, then Miriam loved him! He pressed the brave animal he bestrode to do her best, and only drew rein when the innate goodness of his heart told him that he was taxing her powers too much. He dismounted, took off the saddle-cloth, washed the mare's back thoroughly in cold water, and was making preparations for a hasty meal, when he heard the clatter of hoofs, and, looking up, saw a man spurring up the river, from the vicinity of Schenectady. Edgar hailed him, calling him by name.

"Where do you ride so fast, William Russell?" The rider stopped quickly, and thrust out a hand to the young man.

"God bless you, Edgar. I am glad you are safe. One Richard Connor rode down to tell the General that you were taken, and he sent me at once to Sir John, to say that, if he hurt a hair of your head he should dearly rue it."

"God bless Phillip Schuyler! I was sure that when he heard I was in danger he would see to it that I should not remain long in trouble. But, thanks to the true hearts and strong arms of my friends in Johnstown, I am safe."

"They freed you then?"

"Yes, they broke into the jail, and took me out, in spite of Sir John and his minions. The very horse I ride is a free gift from the hand of Sampson Sammons, as true a Whig as lives in the Mohawk Valley. What is Phillip Schuyler doing?"

"He is gathering his forces at Schenectady, and intends to throw down the power of Sir Guy and his brother-in-law. His instructions from Philadelphia were strict to watch the Indian agent, and see that no trouble is hatched among the Mohawks by him. Joseph Brandt is his friend and interpreter, and will do any thing for him. We are afraid of what he may do in the three valleys."

"Have you any other instructions to Sir John, besides this in regard to me?"

"Yes. He has been fortifying about his Hall, planting swivels upon all sides. Again, his accursed tenantry are the pest of the country. He must be made to keep the peace."

"Then, remember this; we have a friend at the Hall, and one who will at all times be ready to do us a service."

"Who is that?"

"Tommy Perkins."

"What is *he* doing at the Hall?"

"Considering the propriety of joining the force Sir Guy is secretly raising in Tryon county, to be commanded by Sir John if they come to open war."

"I think I understand, and shall have nothing to say to him except when we are alone. It would not be well to seem to know him."

"No, it would destroy him."

"Very well; but I have no time to stay. You will find the General at the village with about three thousand men. The people of this county are determined to rid themselves of the Johnsons at all hazards."

"Nothing could please me more. I have no reason to love the Johnsons after all that has been done, I assure you. There is one who claims the name, Guy Johnson the younger, who shall feel the weight of my vengeance. I was about to eat a little of the provision which I find has been stored in the saddle-bags of this good horse."

"Do you know the younger Guy Johnson, then? He was seen yesterday in Schenectady."

"What was he doing there?"

"I do not know. He came there in the morning, staid three hours in conference with some well-known Tories, and spent the rest of the day at the Royal George. In the evening

Dave Connor joined him, and they rode away together. I left about the same time, and on the road passed seven Mohawks, who were resting on the bank of the river, not two miles from Connor's house. Connor is the young man who told us you were taken."

"I know, I know. You saw these Indians near Connor's house, you say. What were they doing there? Was Guy Johnson with them?"

"They were sitting on the bank under the trees. Johnson was not with them, then; but two horses were tied near by, which I could swear were those ridden by Guy and his friend David Connor."

"I must go, then. Oh, if any thing *has* happened while I have been dling here! Guy Johnson has no right there. I must go."

He was in his saddle as he spoke, but Russell stopped him. "What is it?" he said. "Can I aid you, Edgar?"

"No, William. Go about your duty. I must be alone in what I have to do."

They shook hands and separated, riding in different directions. Edgar spurred the black mare to her best speed, and before long came in sight of the house of Connor. An indefinable sense of fear fell upon him. He saw that all was quiet about the place, and rode into the yard. Dick was standing near the door, superintending the saddling of his horse. He turned at the sound of hoofs, and held out both hands, uttering a shout of joy.

"It's the captain, hurrah! Hi, John, come out here."

John came out, manifesting his joy in a more quiet way than his brother, and shaking hands cordially.

"How did you escape from the hands of the Philistines?" asked Dick.

Edgar explained his escape.

"Good. So, while we were raising the hotheads of this section to rescue you, old Sampson Sammons beats us all. Miriam will be glad to hear this news."

"Shame upon me, that I have not sooner asked after her. How is Miss Miriam?"

"Well in body. Your capture has caused her great uneasiness of mind, however, as indeed it did to us all. We

have been busy since you went away. New York men are now burning to emulate the deeds of their brothers in Massachusetts and Connecticut; God bless them."

"The fire burns brightly, and I tell you, that every hearthstone in this land will be an altar upon which their best and bravest must be sacrificed. But the sacrifice will be made willingly, in the good cause."

"God grant it, and aid us all to do our duty," said Richard.

"Amen!" responded John, fervently. "Where is your sister?" asked the captain. "I do not see her."

"She went up to neighbor Fenton's yesterday afternoon to pass the night. It is time she was here."

Edgar looked troubled again. "To tell you the truth," said he, "though I am loth to excite your fears, I should feel safer if she were at home. Bands of Indians have been seen lurking about the river all this week, Mohawks, friends of Guy Johnson and your brother. That young reprobate has been seen, too, in company with these savages. I wish your sister was at home."

"You startle me. Who saw these Indians?"

"Lieutenant William Russell of the General's staff. But, your brother was in company with the Johnson. Surely he would never harm his sister."

"You do not know David Connor. He knows no kindred, when his passions are once aroused. He has taken a violent stand against us, in this contest, and I know he wants for the time to come when he can meet me in open battle. God grant that time may never come, for the same mother gave us nourishment. John, ride up to neighbor Fenton's and tell our sister that the captain is here and wishes to see her. Here, take my horse with you. It need not take you a minute. I beg your pardon for allowing what you said to excite me for a moment. No, no. You are right. No brother could do a wrong to one so good and beautiful as my sister Miriam."

"No one with a human heart," said Edgar, earnestly. "I am glad you consider her safe. Only, I warn you, guard against Lieutenant Guy Johnson. He will do her a wrong if he can. His bad nature is cruelly aroused against her

since the day I chastised him for his insolence up the river."

"I have had an eye upon him. It will be a sad day for him when we come to settle for that insult to my sister. The Indian blood in his veins is better than the white, for the Johnson blood is hot, crafty and cruel. Look at these two baronets, Guy and John. Their tenantry cling to them more through fear than love. They say that this Guy Johnson is the son of the old baronet, by Molly Brandt, and was sent away to nurse at New York, as he was a favorite of his father's. Nothing could be gained by proclaiming his true father, or you should hear him boast of it. As it is, he is only a *nephew* of Sir Guy Johnson, and came from England to try his fortune in this new world. A plausible story, but one which is worn to threads by long use."

"How far is it to Mr. Fenton's?"

"About a mile," said the other, looking nervously up the river in the direction John had gone. "He will not let the grass grow under his feet. Come in, and see a gun I have had sent me from New York. It is a rifle. I am a good shot, and like that piece the best."

They went into the house and examined the new gun—one of those heavy, long-barreled pieces made in those days, to carry a small ball. The riflemen of our day would find some difficulty in firing off-hand with such a gun. After it had been looked over, and commented upon, they wandered restlessly out of the house and crossed the fields to the place where Mr. Connor was superintending some logging. He did not join in their fears for Miriam, and pooh-pooled any such idea. They passed a miserable half hour and were strolling back to the house, when they saw John riding with reckless speed down the river-bed toward them. They ran hastily across a wide field and met him.

"She is not there," he cried, hoarsely.

"Not there! Where is she?"

"God knows. She is not there and she has not been there at all. They waited for her last night and were sure she would come as she had promised, but they did not see her."

"Your fears were well founded, Captain Chambers. What shall we do? Which way shall we turn?"

"We must look after the track of these scoundrels. In the light snow which fell yesterday, they can not move without leaving a broad trail. Once on it, we will not turn back until we have found her, if we follow them into the Mohawk lodges. There is my hand upon it. She shall be found. I pledge myself to the work."

Dick grasped the extended hand in his. "They shall find what it is to rob a brother of a sister. John, go to father and tell him what has been done. Do not take more time than you can help, but break it to him gently. Then come to us. We will all be needed in this business."

John dismounted and ran quickly across the field, to the logging ground. Dick led the horses back to the house, tied them, and went into the house for arms and ammunition. He brought out three rifles, one of which he gave to Edgar.

"It is a good one," he said. "My father used it for a long while, and kept it well. You said that William Russell saw some Indians upon the river. Did he say where?"

"Not two miles above this place."

"They must have been at one time within half a mile of the house. My dear girl; my poor Miriam! Have they taken you from me? I will find you or die."

John came back soon, accompanied by his father, who was literally overwhelmed with grief. He undertook to inform Mrs. Connor of their bereavement, upon which the three young men mounted and rode away. They found the steps of the young girl in the light snow, and they continued unbroken for half a mile. As they reached a spot near a thicket, upon the river-bank, they found a spot where a struggle had taken place. Moccasin-tracks were imprinted upon the snow, together with the marks of the white man's boot. Close to the edge of the river was a mark as if a canoe had been hauled up out of the water, and again pushed in. From this spot there were many hoof-marks, as if a party had ridden away. A canoe had left the shore, too. Which way had she gone, in the boat or with the mounted party? They were in a quandary, and huddled together for some moments in a hasty conference. It was decided to follow the mounted men, hoping if they could be found, to force from them the knowledge of Miriam's fate.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT TOMMY PERKINS DID FOR THE KING.

No sooner had Tommy satisfied himself that his master was set at liberty than he rode at full speed to the Hall and raised a din which might almost have raised the dead. "Murder! treason! fire!" were the mildest words in his vocabulary. He shouted himself hoarse asserting that the rebels were turning Johnson upside down. It was only after Sir John had seized him by the neck and shaken him soundly, that he was able to utter a coherent sentence.

"Now, you young scoundrel, answer me or I will break every bone in your skin. What are these accursed Whigs doing at the village. Is it a riot?"

"Is it—which?"

"Disturbance, I mean. Oh, that such *swine* should be created."

"If that is what riot means, then it is a *tre-mendous* and most *unmitigated* and *eternal* riot."

"Who are the leaders?"

"A most *tre-mendous* chap as I ever saw. Lord, how he pitched into the door of the jail."

"The jail! Have they dared to attempt to break into that? I will have them hung as sure as my name is Johnson. What did they break into the jail for?"

"To let out that man you put in the other day. The cap'n, you know."

Thrusting the boy violently to one side, Sir John rushed to his horse and rode into the village, followed at intervals by his retainers. He found the town in confusion. Tories, who had just been aroused by the tumult, were running about in the street, looking for the Whigs, not one of whom was in sight. The sheriff came out and identified Sammons as the man at whom he had fired, but he was nowhere to be found. After a great deal of bluster, Sir John returned to the Hall, where he occupied himself in writing letters in answer to some

Tory correspondents in various parts of the colonies. Tommy received considerable credit for raising the alarm against the Whigs, though some ill-natured Tories were disposed to be angry because he had not done it before they dispersed. He had ingratiated himself into the favor of Sir Guy, and was regarded as a lack-wit, who would do no harm and might be useful.

Tommy's brains were busy all the time. He had taken upon himself the double duty of watching the motions of Sir John and his brother-in-law, together with Lieutenant Guy Johnson and his friend David Connor. That worthy had disappeared during the days just preceding the escape of Captain Chambers, and Tommy thought he knew where he had gone. The sharp lad had been able to put into form the various hints he had received and made out from them that his master loved his gentle nurse at the farm-house and that Guy Johnson hated him for that reason. He determined that the young Tory should do nothing without his knowledge, and only the fact that he was working to liberate his master stopped him from following the young men when they departed on their recent enterprise. One of them came back next day, and the day after Guy Johnson appeared, just in time to hear of the escape of the prisoner. He was less affected by the news than was expected, replying to the information only by a sardonic smile.

Something which he had done surely occupied his mind or he could not have heard of the escape of his hated enemy with so much composure. He was constantly going aside to talk with David. Once Tommy, creeping behind them as they stood in the court of the hall and leaning against a post, was able to make out that they were talking about a woman, who was to be made to yield to some plan of theirs.

"She must yield, David; her proud spirit must be broken. She must come to our terms."

"Yes; but remember this. Threaten as much as you please, but never, as you value my friendship, proceed to actual violence. I am not so completely debased that I will stand by and see that done, by any man, no matter how dear to me. She must not be brutally used, Guy. When we were children I remember that she loved me best; better than John

even; but it is past now; it lies with my other dead hopes, deep in its grave. I have joined you in this attempt, I have given you my hand upon it that I will aid you; yet I swear to you, that if you offer personal violence, real violence I mean, to that girl, I will call you out myself."

"I think you had better keep your heroics until they are called for," said Guy. "No one said any thing about offering violence to the girl; though if you expect to win her to our object by coaxing, you will waste your labor. I tried that."

"I shall talk to her myself. What did she say when you gave her the use of her tongue?"

"Gave me the full benefit of it. S'death! I never heard a woman crowd so many hard names into so small a space as *she* did."

"Will old Meeker take care that she does not give him the slip? If she does, she is so well known about here that the furies will be to pay and no pitch hot. The Whigs of Tryon will make the country too hot to hold us if they find it out. It is bad enough now. You know Schuyler's messenger came to the Hall to-day with a polite request that we should give up our arms and remain a sort of prisoners in our own township. Did you hear it?"

"What answer will Sir John make to this insolent demand?"

"I don't know. The cursed Whigs have the power in this county if they only knew it; but they have been used to knuckle to our gentry so long that it comes natural. They are angry now, and they say Schuyler has three thousand of the blackguards at Schenectady. Enough to eat us, body and bones."

"The Indians are hot for the scalping to begin; Joseph Brandt is quiet now and deprecates war; but the Whigs shall yet tremble at the name of 'Thayendanegea.'"

"I doubt it; but to what we were speaking of before. Be gentle with her, surround her by evidences of your love, and except in giving her liberty, do not let her feel as if she was a prisoner. Trust me, this is the true way, for the Connor family are true as steel; they bend, not break. As I tell you, let her understand that she can not escape; that the Meekers are

employed to watch her and that they will do their duties in this respect."

"I shall follow your advice; but I know it will not work. The girl hates me; she will never go quietly to the altar at my side."

"Give her up, then, and let her go back to her home."

"That I never will do. I have her and I mean to keep her. If she will not marry me by fair means, she shall by foul."

"You eternal thief!" muttered Tommy, before he thought.

Both men turned and saw the lad standing a little way off, still leaning against a post, and calmly contemplating the sky.

"Do you think he heard us?" asked David.

"Call him."

"Say, you, Perkins."

"Re-too-ri-loo-ri-loo-ri-loo!" sung Tommy, utterly oblivious to the presence of the others.

"You young scoundrel."

"Up-te-doodle-day!"

"Perkins!"

"And when he came to a darned big hill," sung Tommy.

"Are you deaf?"

"Ri-too, ri-loo-ri-loo."

"He don't hear you," said Guy.

"He couldn't get up; and stays there still,

Ri-too-loora-la!"

Giving him up as a bad job, they left him humming his tune with great zeal and went into the house. Soon after they left it together, booted for a long walk, and took their way through the woods to the north. They had not left the Hall more than five minutes when Tommy Perkins strolled out after them, humming the song upon which he had been engaged when David tried to get his attention. They led him by a tangled path, through bush and brake, until they came to a clearing in the woods upon the very outskirts of the government grants. The house was inhabited by a family named Meeker, rough men, long used to the ways of the savages, and even preferring their customs to those of civilized life. There was only one woman in the family, a squaw of the Mohawk

tribe, the wife of old Abel Meeker. He had three stout sons who would face the hug of a grizzly bear and think it sport. Every thing about the cabin was rough and uncouth, and even the horses and cattle grazing in the clearing were rough and unkempt, like their masters.

They had bad faces, father and sons. Sin had stamped plain characters upon them. Brutal and wholly ungoverned passions showed themselves in every line. Even their voices partook of the character of their frames, and were deep and rough.

One of the sons was chopping up a log into sticks for the great stone fireplace when the visitors came into the clearing. He struck his ax into the wood and greeted them with a grunt, supposed to have been one of satisfaction.

"I hope you've come prepared," he said, sitting down on the log, and resting his broad red face upon his brown palms, with his elbows on his knees. "I hope you can convince this unreasonable critter that good deer-meat was made to eat and not to fling away. That gal ain't tasted a morsel as we gin her."

"She will eat when she is hungry, if you leave it in her room. Does she talk much?"

"Don't do much else," replied the fellow. "She've got a tongue of her own, she hev."

"Don't be insolent, fellow," said Guy, looking at him fiercely. "Bridle your tongue, or you may chance to lose a portion of it. The young lady is to be spoken of only with respect."

"No offense, I hope," growled the backwoodsman. "A man may speak. You are out of the towns now. Threats won't do here, my fine spark."

"Come, now, Caleb," interposed David, "none of your sulks. Where is she?"

"Mother Kate is there; she'll show you. Did you ever see January and May in the same month? You'll see the like of it when she and mother Kate stand side by side."

They went into the cabin—a squalid and dirty place, stained upon floor and walls with the blood of the game the "boys" had brought home from the forest. Croning over the hearth as they entered sat an Indian woman, considerably advanced

in years. She looked up at them with a quick flash of her dark eye which boded no good to intruders. An Indian woman is rarely beautiful. It is generally those who have white blood in their veins who lay claim to it. But when they *are* ugly, they are *superlatively* so. Mother Kate was bent and shriveled like a mummy, her face drawn into innumerable wrinkles, while her sharp black eyes yet sparkled as if with the fire of youth.

Miriam Connor sat upon the other side of the fireplace, with a sad look upon her beautiful face. At the sound of footsteps she looked up, and recognizing her brother, sprung to her feet with a cry of joy, and threw herself upon his shoulder in a transport of weeping.

"Oh, David, you have come to take me from this fearful place. Why did you not come before? How did you know I was here?"

The face of the young Tory worked with strange feeling. The thought of what his sister had been to him in childhood was strong upon him, and he was tempted to take her away and restore her to her home.

"You *have* come to take me home, David?" she repeated, in a questioning tone. "You surely are not a party to my brutal capture? Why are you here with this villain, at the sight of whom my blood boils in my veins?"

"Whom do you call a villain?" asked David, coldly. "Not my friend, Guy Johnson, I hope?"

"What is he who tears an unoffending girl from her home, where she has been kindly and gently reared, and places her in the midst of associations like these? What is he, who, disregarding her prayers, refuses to return her to her parents unless she will give up her idea of what is right and what is wrong, what is just and what is unjust, and marry him, hating him as I do? What is *such* a man? Consider, brother, before you call him your friend."

"I have considered. You have been brought here with my permission, and here you stay until you are willing to act as a sensible girl should. No prayers will avail. No protestations will be heeded. You must learn to look upon this place as your prison, unless you will consent to marry my friend. From this prison there is no escape, believe me

The men who live here will never leave you alone. The Indian woman's place will be near you. Do not think to escape."

"You propose to wait, then, until I am ready to marry your friend?" said Miriam, drawing herself up, proudly. "I shall tire your patience, then."

"Do not try it. I shall leave you for the present with Guy. He will tell you, better than I can, what he intends to do."

He left the room, beckoning to the Indian woman to follow him, which she did, chuckling and coughing at a great rate. Guy closed the door after them, and turning to Miriam, said:

"Here we are, my dear Miriam, seated as we should be to argue the matter calmly. There is no reason why we should make any unnecessary words about the matter. Your good brother, my special friend, has placed it in its true light. While you may expect to be kindly treated, your actions will have a certain constraint put upon them. You will be watched, and all attempts to escape will be frustrated. You would do well to make up your mind to accede to my demand."

"Have you finished?"

"If you wish to speak."

"Hear me, then. Words can hardly convey the utter detestation in which I hold you. If I could live to the extent of antediluvian life, I think I could endure imprisonment here all that life long, sooner than to marry you at any price. Whatever you may say, you can not shake me in this decision."

He had risen again, and stood holding by the back of the chair, while a gust of fearful passion swept across his face. For some seconds he seemed to gasp for breath, and his eyes were blood-shot. It was over soon, and he got breath to speak.

"Once before, when you spoke to me in this way, I warned you that it would not be safe to repeat it. I can't bear much more."

"Rid me of your presence then. It is as hateful to me as your proffers of love."

"I am going. Don't think I shall forget."

"I don't expect it."

He went out slowly and had a talk with David. They decided to leave her for the present, and attend to some troublesome affairs at Johnson Hall. They walked hastily away from the cabin, after some words of instruction to the grim

jailer and his repulsive mother. They had not been long gone when Tommy emerged from the woods, where he had been crouching while they staid, and advanced toward the man called Caleb, who watched his approach in a suspicious manner. Tom sauntered on, with his hands in his pockets, and nodded graciously to Caleb, who resumed his chopping.

"Cold day, this; everlasting cold a man might say if inclined to be particular. *Tre-mendous* cold."

Caleb assented to the proposition by a grunt, still eying the youngster suspiciously.

"Captain Dave sent me back to say something to the young woman they are keeping here—something he forgot to say."

"That's not Cap'n Dave's way. Who are you?"

"My name is Perkins—Tommy Perkins when you put it all down. I used tew live down tew Weathersfield, I did. But a goll-darned old uncle of mine, Josiah Perkins is his name and migratin' his natur', left hum tew live somewhere in this section. I'm lookin' for him."

"What have you got to do with this young woman Cap'n Dave left here?"

"Cap'n Dave and Lieutenant Guy, them's the ones I mean, Connor and Johnson, to wit: one little chap with an eye like a snake and a quick finger on a pistol-trigger. Yew know *him*. Another with a little black or red blood in him, black as a thundercloud, white teeth and a quick finger also. Miss Miriam Connor, han'sum as a pictur' and sweet as a peach. Yew see I know 'em all."

Caleb, completely deceived, opened the door of the cabin, and admitted Tommy, who walked in with the air of a prince.

"Keep the old woman out," he said. "This meeting is strictly private, this is. Don't let's have any peeping."

"Why do you come here?" demanded Miriam, rising.

"Yew take a woman's privilege of asking questions," said Tommy, taking a chair by the fire. "I also take the man's I'll answer when I darn please; so take your time, Miss Connor, and ask as many as *yew* like."

Miriam, who had never seen Tommy before, looked at him in utter astonishment, which he bore with great composure.

"Who sent you here?" she asked.

"Go on," said Tommy. "I ain't a-goin' tew be the man

tew stop you, I ain't. But, I guess you hadn't better let the questions accumulate, or you may hev to say some of 'em over ag'in. Them's my sentiments."

Seeing that nothing could be got out of the boy, Miriam remained quiet, looking at him with a puzzled expression of countenance all the time. At last he rose, looked in the next room, satisfied himself th at no one was listening at the door, and drew a chair close to Miriam.

"Say that last question ag'in, Miss Connor, and say it low, if you please."

"Who sent you here?" she repeated, the look of perplexity deepening on her face.

"Wa-al, I got a sort of roving commission. I heard Captain Dave and young Guy talking yesterday, and I made out that some woman was bein' kept somewhere against her will, so I follered 'em. Fustly; dew yew want to stay here?"

"No."

"Dew you really hate Guy Johnson, or are you only making believe?"

"I hate him!"

"Now, I want to say a word. I her seen you afore, though you didn't know it, and I hev heard some one talk about you. Would you like to know *who*?"

"Yes; I would like to hear how you came to know me."

"It was Captain Ed as told me."

A quick flush passed over the face of the girl. "Captain Chambers, do you mean?"

"The same, tew wit; jest so. He talks about yew. Don't know what tew dew for Captain Ed. He's hit bad, he is."

"Did he send you here?"

"Not he. Fact is, he don't know that I am here at a^l I'm a Tory man, I tell yew, red hot, fired hot. There ain't any thing I hate like a Tryon county Whig. 'Pears to me I could whop a hull individual cargo of the cusses, all alone."

"What a boy you are. Why did you come here if yor think that? You don't come here to help me, I am very sure."

"Yes, I do. I shouldn't wonder if you had visitors some of these nights. Self and pony, I reckon. You keep up a good heart. I'm a red-hot Tory; but I'm a Whig

tew yew. When you hear me tap at your window come tew me, and don't wake up the old woman, or there will be trouble, and I know it. Now, dew a little actin'. Git *mad*. Call me all the names you can lay your tongue to, and drive me out."

"What is that for?"

"Pull the wool over their eyes, don't you see? They'll think we are mad at one another. I'll begin," changing his tone. "Ef yew don't dew as Captain Dave wants you, it won't be very soon you'll get out of this. Oh, don't get *mad*! *That* won't do any good, as I see. Don't rile up; please don't."

"Leave the room!" said Miriam, affecting anger; "and never come into it again on such an errand."

"I don't know as you hev got any choice about it, anyhow, I'll come when I darn please. Ef Lieutenant Guy or Cap'n Dave say come ag'in to-morrow, I'll dew it."

He left the room almost tumbling over Caleb, who was listening at the door. Luckily he had got there just as they raised their voices, and received the full benefit of the change, causing him to take leave of any lingering suspicions he had of Tommy. That worthy came out, cool and complacent, looking and feeling a match for the whole world.

"She's a t'arer," said the boy. "Mind, I tell yew, she thinks she won't have tew dew as Cap'n Dave wants her. Maybe she won't."

"Are you going to the Hall?"

"Yes. And now let me give you a piece of advice. Don't be hard on that girl. I'll tell you why. If any thing was tew happen tew her, I don't know what they mightn't dew tew yew. They think heaps on her."

The fellow nodded, and they entered into a desultory conversation on the state of the country, and what Sir John would do in the event of a war. Tommy, by taking things for granted of which nothing had been said, and leading up to it skillfully, found out that the Meekers, in common with the other Tories of Tryon, were pledged to uphold Sir John. Having pumped every thing from him that could be of any use, Tommy inserted his hands in his pockets, and took himself away.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TORY OUTWITTED.

TOMMY, upon leaving the cabin, made all speed until he reached Johnson Hall. He found it in some confusion, pending the approach of Phillip Scuyler, with the continental forces. They would no longer trust in the promises of Sir John and had determined to drive him out of the county. When Tommy reached the Hall, Sir John was about leaving it, to meet General Schuyler, and make as good terms as he could under the circumstances. Guy and David both remained in their places, for they did not care to meet Phillip Schuyler after the work they had done in Tryon county. Tommy was disconcerted because the two men staid, as he had hoped that they would accompany the two baronets down the river and leave the coast clear for him to effect the liberation of Miriam. Determined not to be balked, however, he kept Guy in sight, and when he left the place, as he did early in the evening, he followed him as he had done before. This time the young Tory appeared to desire to elude the brother of the imprisoned girl and he effected his object.

"The mean sneak!" muttered Tommy. "He'll try some of his tricks, now that Cap'n Dave is away. I guess he'll have some one to watch him, at any rate."

Guy strode away through the forest at a quick pace and reached the cabin. He had no idea that the subtle lad was close upon his track and watched every step he took. When he reached the cabin and was admitted, the boy crossed the opening and hid himself behind the house in order to hear whatever might be said. From his position he could see the inside of the cabin, through a chink in the wall. Miriam had risen upon the first approach of the hated Johnson and stood with blazing eyes in the cabin, glaring at the intruder.

"None of your heroics, my proud beauty," Guy was saying. "They can effect me no more than your graces can from this hour. You ask me why I am here, how I dare to

come back, after what has been said. I dare any thing. You shall feel what it is to turn love into hate."

"What do you mean to do?"

"I shall take you from this house and place you in a cabin far in the forest, where your brother, who is turning squeamish all at once, can never find you. Do not hope to escape from my hands. I have bribed the Meekers to say that you have escaped, and perished in the forest."

"As I look at you," said Miriam, "I wonder if you have a human heart."

"I have, hot and burning as the fires of hell. The time is past for you to make me your slave."

"I will appeal to this family to aid me."

"Try them. You will see how much effect your words will have upon them."

"You have chosen fit instruments for your base designs. Be it as you say. You may drag me from this place and bury me in the forest. You may, as you have the power, drive me to my grave and not make me yield to your demands."

"Say you so?" he said, with the laugh of a fiend. "We shall see how it will work when I have you to myself."

"I will struggle. I will escape."

"Fool! What chance have you for that? Where would you go? You would wander about aimlessly and at last drop down and die in the woods."

"Better that than what you demand. Let me go forth. I will dare the perils of the wilderness if you will give me leave."

"I know you would, my darling. I do not mean to give you the opportunity you so much desire. You have a hood and scarf here; put them on."

"I will not."

"You will be forced to do it. Why will you make a scene? Alone I could force you to do it, but I shall call upon the Meekers to assist me, for I have no time to lose."

Miriam retreated to the wall and snatched up a knife which the old woman, who had been splitting kindlings for the fire, had inadvertently left upon the floor. The face of the girl seemed glorified. She looked like Judith standing above the dead form of Holofernes; Judith, who saved Israel. The Tory shrunk from the flash of her dark eye.

"What would you do?" he demanded. "Would you murder me?"

"I would not call it murder to kill you, dog that you are. We slay any fierce and savage thing that threatens us, and why should I hesitate about you who are more ruthless than the lion in his worst mood, for men give him the quality of generosity, while you do not know what that means."

"Hear, hear," muttered Tommy. "Wouldn't I like to make a button-hole in his jacket, though? I'll do it, too, if he will give me half a chance."

"Be reasonable," said Guy. "What can you do? I am not fool enough to come within reach of that knife, but there are those near at hand who will make no more of it than a sword in the hand of a child; Caleb."

The huge form of Caleb Meeker darkened the doorway. "What's wanted?" he demanded, briefly.

"Take away that knife."

Caleb advanced toward the daring girl. "Come, my pretty poppet," he said. "Give up that toothpick. 'Tain't no manner of use to sech as you. Give it up hyar."

"Don't touch me, or I shall do you an injury," cried Miriam, grasping the knife firmly."

"You don't think I am afraid of that little weepen?" said Caleb, laughing. "We ain't the sort of little boys to scare that a-way. Come, you can't hurt with it more than if it was a pin."

"Try me and see," said she, angrily, making a pass at him with the knife, and touching him slightly on the arm. This incensed him, and he sprung upon her, seized her by the wrist, and wrested the blade from her hand. In her desperation she cried out for help, and it came. The ruffian was handling her roughly, dragging her along at arm's-length, when a pistol cracked suddenly and a ball whistled through his brain. The action was so sudden that Guy stood in stupid amazement for some moments, looking at the prostrate form of the Tory. Where the shot had come from he could not tell, or how soon he might fall by the same hand. The hesitation was only momentary, for he dashed open the door and darted out into the little clearing. No one was in sight, and all the Meekers, including the old woman, had gone out to prepare the lodge in the woods for the reception of the prisoner. He ran round

the house and found the place where Tommy had crouched, and the tracks of his moccasins in the light snow. But a wind had risen filling up the tracks and it was growing dark. Tommy had taken the precaution, upon leaving the Hall, to steal a pair of moccasins from one of the Mohawks, which certainly were nearly a foot in length. Guy supposed, from the appearance of the tracks, that some one of remarkable stature had fired the shot. He returned to the house and found that Miriam had regained possession of the knife as well as a pistol from the body of the fallen man, whom she had dragged into a small room apart from the place in which he fell. This done, she had secured the door upon the inside, and Guy found himself out in the cold until such time as she saw fit to let him in, which did not promise to occur soon. The weather was as cold as it could well be in January, and he was not over-thickly clad, having thrown off his cloak in the cabin. Just at this moment he heard the shouts of the Meekers, and saw their torches in the distance. He determined to wait until they came. In a few moments they appeared, old Abel Meeker striding on in front, with Mother Kate at his side, and his long-limbed sons bringing up the rear. He started back as he saw the Tory.

"What, now?" he growled. "Where is Caleb?"

Guy hesitated. He knew that the old man had a rough sort of affection for his offspring, and that Caleb was his eldest born and favorite son. The old man noted his hesitation, and reaching his side by two long strides, grasped his arm.

"What has come to the boy?" he said. "Why do you lurk about like a thief?"

"The door is closed; I can not get in," said Guy.

"Is Caleb there? He would never leave the girl after his promise given. Does he speak when you call?"

"No," replied Guy, solemnly. "He will never again come at your call. His ears are stopped with dust. He is dead."

"Dead!" said the old man, in a husky whisper, looking at his Indian wife. "Do you hear that, dame? How came he dead, Guy Johnson? Where lies he?"

Guy explained the matter as well as he could, interrupted by the muttered curses of the old man. He stepped to the spot where the boy had crouched and looked at the tracks.

"See," said he, after a little, holding down the torch above the marks. "He knelt here and put the pistol through the crack in the logs. See what carelessness will do. The wind has been blowing bleak through that hole this many a day, and now see. I meant to close it to-morrow, and my waiting has murdered my son. Come in, dame. We must look at our dead."

He tried the door and found it fast. "How is this?" he cried. "Is any one within?"

"I ran out to see who fired the shot and she barred the door," said Guy, in a sulky tone. "She will not open it."

"Girl," cried Abel.

"Well?" replied Miriam, calmly.

"Open the door. Let me look upon my dead son."

"I can not open," replied Miriam.

"Hear me," said Caspar. "I only ask to come in that I may take my son's dead body where his kindred can see his face. We will take him out and you may lock the door again. In the presence of God and the dead, I swear to you that no man shall lay a hand upon you until you are able to make every thing as secure as it is now."

There was no mistaking the old man. He spoke the truth and meant religiously to keep his oath.

She let down the bar and they came in, the old man first. His stern old face was set firmly, but she could see that he felt deeply. Miriam made a silent gesture, indicating the room in which the body lay, and they went in. He lay as she had left him, with his head pillowed on his brawny arm, and a little stream of blood dried upon his forehead.

"Cursed be the hand that fired the shot," said the father.

"Amen!" said the two stern brothers.

"Lift him," said the father, "and take him out." The sons obeyed and the mother followed. Abel and Guy only remained.

"Why do you not go?" said the old man. "We waste time."

"Surely, you do not think I am fool enough to go out and let her lock the door upon us?"

Without a word of reply the old man seized him by the shoulders and thrust him out at the door, following himself. Miriam closed the door and dropped the bars into their places.

She heard Guy struggling in his hands and calling down upon his head all sorts of appalling maledictions.

"What do you mean?" he cried. "You have let her escape us again."

"I swore in the name of the dead, that she should not be harmed," was the unmoved reply. "You can not make me angry to-night. I go to bury my dead out of my sight, and you may stand here and watch. When our work is done, we will come to you again, and then we will attend to the girl."

They found mattocks and spades in one of the outbuildings, and the three strong men, under the cold January sky, began to dig the grave of the fallen. Guy, standing in the shadow of the cabin, heard the implements rattle on the hard soil. Wrapping his recovered cloak about him, as the wind blew colder, he stepped further out, where he could see the burial party at their work. The grave was dug, and they had wrapped the body first in blankets, and then in birch bark, and laid it in the shallow grave. As the young man turned, the first spadeful of earth fell upon the body, and soon the work was finished.

The family returned. They had done their best by the dead, and now they were ready to do any wrong to the living. A fierce light began to show itself in their eyes. By nature they were cruel, and the sight of blood excited them.

"I am not used to being shut out of my own house," Abel shouted. "Ho, girl! Open the door."

Miriam had taken time to reflect, and knowing that if she refused to open they would batter down the door, and perhaps subject her to some indignity, she concluded to open the door and admit them. They came trooping in at once, and stood sullenly about the fire warming their half-frozen hands, and casting sullen looks at the shrinking girl.

"You can't take her away to-night," said Abel, looking at Guy, who nodded in response.

"Then she can't do better than go to bed," said the other, "as you go early in the morning. Girl, go to bed."

She retired into the little room set apart for her, and watched the family as they sat crooning over the fire until very late. In watching them she grew drowsy and so fell asleep. When she woke it was yet dark, for a pine torch was burning in

the large room, but the old woman was up, preparing a hasty meal. When it was finished, she was called out to partake, and when the repast was over, she was told to put on her cloak and hood and go with them. There was little use in a feeble girl resisting four strong men, so she yielded with a good grace and followed the footsteps of her conductor, out into the cold January morning. A rough-coated horse stood at the door, harnessed to a nondescript looking vehicle, called in the parlance of the country a "jumper," large enough to hold two persons. Miriam was placed in it, and Abel Meeker took a seat at her side.

"Now, mind," said he. "No screeching; no caterwauling, or I shall gag you. I won't stand it."

Miriam thought it best to remain silent, and they pursued their journey over the light snow, Guy walking by the side of the jumper, and the two sons of Meeker striding on in the rear with their heavy rifles thrown across their shoulders. They had about five miles to go to reach the cabin, which was a sort of hunting-lodge erected by the Meekers for their convenience, when too much fatigued to go to their homes, or when overtaken by night in the forest. It was a lonely place, and Miriam felt a shudder pass over her as they emerged from the thick woods and stood before it. About half an acre had been cleared of trees, and in the very center stood the log cabin, an ungainly structure, but a strong prison. One of the "boys" set to work lighting a fire in the chimney-place, and a roaring flame was soon darting up among the blackened limestone of which the chimney was built. Miriam was placed in a little room by herself, with only one narrow window, from which she could see the gloomy woods behind the house. A huge pile of dressed bearskins were thrown upon the floor, upon which she was expected to sleep. She looked from the window and saw Guy and two of the Meekers pass the corner of the house, and go out upon a hunt. They meant to provide her with provisions and then leave one of their number as her guard, until she chose to come to her senses and marry Guy Johnson. She set her teeth hard, and vowed that it should never be.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW IT ENDED.

THE Meekers had hardly departed, when Miriam saw, from her window, the boy called Tommy Perkins, emerging from the woods and advancing at a quick pace across the open space in front of the house, with a rifle thrown across his arm. He was whistling loudly, and appeared to take pains to make his coming known to the younger Meeker, who had been left in charge. That worthy seized his rifle and ran out to see who made the noise, but was reassured by the sight, though far from pleased that the boy was here. He came up with his usual free and easy swagger, and answered young Meeker's inquiries by saying that he had been sent by Captain Dave with a message to Guy Johnson.

"Does Dave Connor know what Guy Johnson is doing?" demanded John Meeker.

"No, he don't," replied Tommy. "And what's more to the point, he'd better not know, or he will raise universal hob about it. He thinks a good deal of his pritty sister, and stands to reason he should."

"How did you find out where we were then?"

"Followed the jumper. The track is as plain as the nose on your face."

"Well, what is your message?"

"Bend nearer and I will tell you. I don't want the girl to hear."

John bent his head, and the boy struck him a stunning blow upon the temple with the butt of a pistol, which brought him to his knee. The blow was repeated with a power that was hardly to be expected from so slight a frame, and he bulky Tory measured his length upon the sod. From some whim of his own, the boy had carried about with him the manacles which had been "presented" to him by Sir John, upon the occasion of his first visit to the Hall. Bending over the prostrate man, he brought his wrists together, and

clasped the bracelets upon them with an experienced jerk. From his pocket he now produced a couple of deerskin ligatures, with which he bound the legs of his prisoner at the ankles and knees. This done, he rolled him into the house, close to the fire, threw on a new log, and asked him if he felt comfortable.

"I'll murder you for this," muttered John.

"No you won't," answered Tommy. "I ain't one of that sort. Don't talk. You waste your breath and I am busy."

Miriam opened the door of her room and came out. "Have you come to save me?"

"I calculate I have. Jest yew wait and see. Stay here a while." In a few moments he drove up to the door, seated in the jumper which had brought her to this place. Throwing the reins upon the ground, he ran into the house and brought out an armful of bearskins.

"I'll have to borrow your hoss and bearskins, my friend," he said. "With your permission, I'll close the door."

Disregarding the curses with which John greeted him, he closed the door, took the reins and drove off at as good a pace as the condition of the road would allow. Giving the cabin a wide berth, he passed on toward the river, and had struck in the beaten road to the Hall, when they heard the tramp of hoofs coming up from below. To turn the horse's head and drive into the bushes, was the work of a moment. They came on at a hand gallop, and were passing the cover, when, with a yell of delight, Tommy dashed out and stopped them. It was the party which had set out to find Miriam—her brothers, and Captain Chambers, who had tracked the horsemen to Johnson Hall, and accused their brother of being concerned in the abduction. Schuyler had taken Sir John's parole, and there was peace for the time being. They had started out to find Guy Johnson at Meeker's, since David, forced by the baronet, had confessed that she was there. They met, as we have seen, and to describe the joy of that meeting, is beyond the power of my pen.

The party returned to the Hall, and found it full of Whigs, and a large party encamped in the village. The obnoxious Scotchmen had given up their arms, and Sir John had promised to keep in the county. In a day or two the Whigs

returned to their homes, and Miriam went with them. Captain Chambers hung at her bridle-rein all the way, and whispered many things which made her hang down her head and blush. What he said, I can not tell, but I think she understood him. The Johnsons did not keep their parole long. In a short time they were detected in stirring up the Indians to mutiny, when the Whigs again assembled. Sir John collected his adherents and the Tories of Tryon, and fled to Canada. There he organized, of the force thus obtained, the regiment which rendered itself so infamous in Revolutionary history, "The Royal Greens." Guy Johnson and David Connor went with him as well as the Meekers, vowing vengeance at some future day.

Oriskany was nearly over, when that last ruse of Johnson's Greens made such havoc in the ranks of the patriots. The effect of that ruse is well known in history. But the sturdy valor of the Tryon county Whigs was too much for the Tories, who had not the zeal for right which inspired their opponents. Fighting in the van of Johnson's Greens, his face white with passion, rode Guy Johnson, cutting a bloody path to the spot where Captain Chambers, unhorsed in the fierce combat, was sweeping his glittering blade from side to side, and sending many a Tory to his last account.

"You and I are well met at Oriskany, Edgar Chambers," he cried.

"Well met, indeed," answered the other, sternly, striking down a savage who was creeping up to get a blow at him with a hatchet. "I have a long list of insults and injuries to avenge, and what better time than now. Your sword is in your hands. Guard yourself, in God's name."

Instead of answering, Guy fired a pistol at him at half range. The ball struck him in the shoulder, inflicting a painful wound. Flinging the discharged pistol at his head, he closed with the sword. At the first blow the captain disabled his horse, and the Tory flung himself from the saddle, while Edgar generously refrained from striking him. The men about them fell back by a common impulse, and watched the fray between the two champions. Their blows came and went like lightning: the eye could scarcely follow the flashing

steel. Guy, while in Canada, had taken lessons of a famous English swordsman, and had made himself a master of the weapon. Edgar found him no such child in his hands as in their former battle. Nevertheless he fought

"With the stern joy which clansmen feel
In foemen worthy of their steel."

He had the advantage of his opponent in temper; but the blood was trickling fast from the wound in his shoulder. Pressing hard upon his enemy, he slipped in the blood of a fallen man and fell, supporting himself on his left elbow, while he warded off the blows which his adversary showered upon him.

"You are mine!" cried Guy. As he spoke, the blade of Edgar broke short at the handle, and he was indeed at the mercy of his enemy.

"Beg for your life," said Guy, placing his foot upon the breast of the fallen man, and menacing him with the bright steel.

"Never!" was the reply. "I can die; do your worst, if it must be so."

"Die, then." His sword was in the air, and the life of Edgar Chambers seemed done, when a solitary rifle spoke from the ranks of the Whigs. Guy dropped his sword, reeled, clasped the clothing on his breast and fell prostrate with a cry which echoed far and wide over the bloody field. At the same moment Tommy Perkins, with a smoking rifle in his grasp, sprung to the spot and helped Edgar to his feet.

"Who fired that shot?" said the rescued man.

"Never you mind," replied Tommy; "here's your sword. Oh, bully Guy, *your* cake is dough."

"I have to thank you for a life," shouted Edgar, to be heard above the din of battle. "If I fall I thank you, if I live I will remember."

"All right; you have said, and now take care of your head. I've got as much as I can do to look out for one Thomas Perkins, Esquire, late of Weathersfield."

They separated and did not see each other again until after the battle, when the Whigs had retreated and camped upon a field miles away. Then Tommy came strolling toward Edgar's tent, and found him sitting at the door, after having

had his wound dressed, looking over a list of the killed and wounded in his company. They made some comments on the battle, and Edgar thanked him again for the service he had done. Tommy averred that the next time he might save himself, and that if he was to be bothered in this manner, he should go away and look for his uncle.

Soon after Richard Connor appeared, with an agonized look upon his face.

"What is the matter, Richard?" said Chambers, kindly. "Have you bad news?"

"Only this," replied Richard, slowly. "John is dead, and a brother's hand sped the ball which laid him low, poor lad!"

And so, his knell was tolled.

In the ensuing spring, Edgar and Miriam were married. After the wedding he returned to the army, coming out of it with all honor and a colonel's commission. Richard Connor was his senior major. Tommy Perkins followed him through all, with a steady devotion which surprised even him. Many a time he interposed between Edgar and danger; once he took a bullet in his own shoulder which would have lodged in his master's heart. When the war ended he returned with the rest and remained with Edgar as overseer to his estates. It is needless to say that he never found that convenient myth, his uncle.

Richard married after the war. A sister of Edgar's visiting her brother won the heart of the brave Continental, and one day he rode over to see her, and asked her the all-important question, and she did not say "nay."

Guy Johnson and his brother-in-law returned to Canada, where a large tract of land was granted to Sir John, who lived there many years, surrounded by his tenants. It came out, some years after, that the young Guy Johnston was a son of old Sir William and an Indian woman of the Mohawk nation. David Connor died miserably, killed by a panther in the forests of Canada. Sampson Sammons and his sons lived to good old age; and died respected by all as the men who struck first in the cause of liberty in Tryon county.

THE END.

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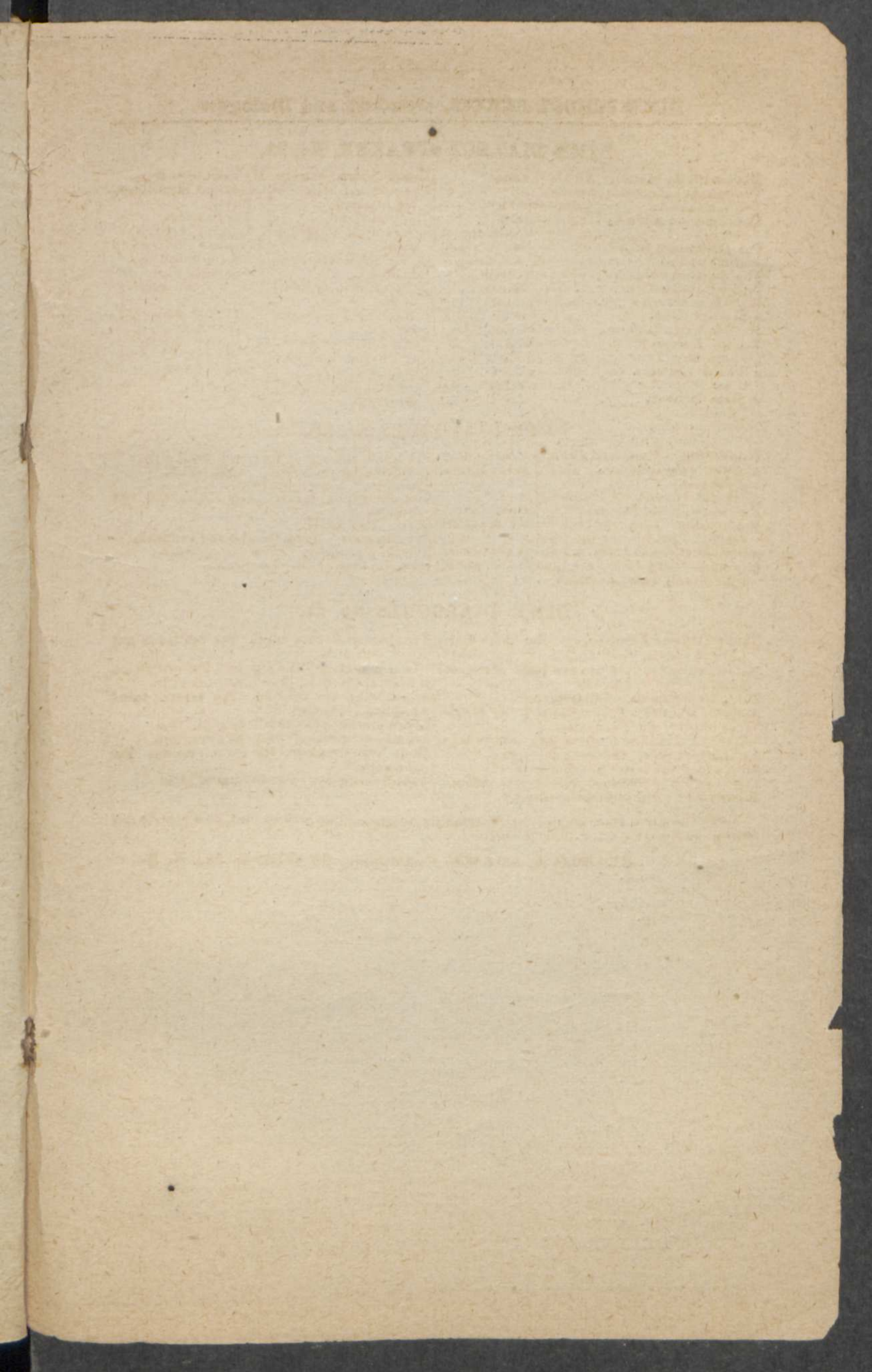
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